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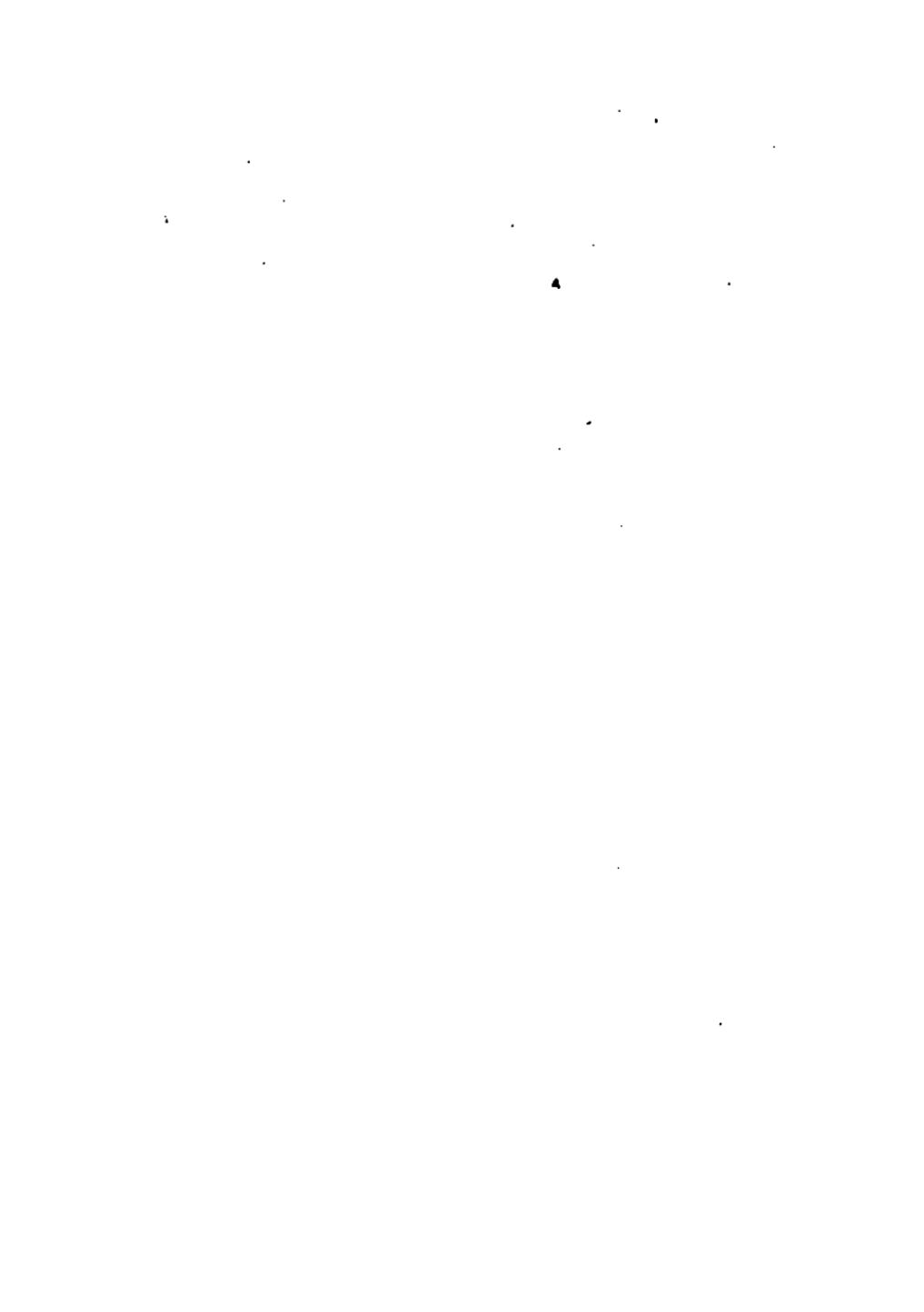
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THE STUDENT'S  
PROPER PSALMS  
WITH NOTES  
HISTORICAL-EXPLANATORY







THE  
**Student's Proper Psalms:**  
BEING  
THE PROPER PSALMS ON CERTAIN DAYS,  
THE TEXT, ARRANGED IN PARALLELISMS,  
AND TAKEN FROM  
THE BIBLE AND PRAYER-BOOK VERSIONS,  
WITH A GENERAL INTRODUCTION,  
AND  
*NOTES HISTORICAL, TEXTUAL, & EXPLANATORY.*

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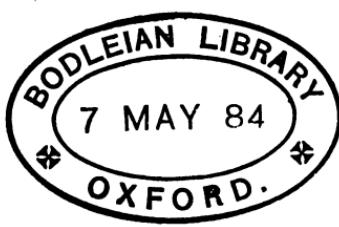
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## P R E F A C E :

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The object of the following pages is to render assistance to those engaged in the study of the *Proper Psalms*. By this is intended not the study merely of the Prayer Book Version of them, nor of the Version of 1611, but the study of the subject-matter of the Psalms themselves.

The character of the Text is consequently the first matter with which the Student is concerned. From its ecclesiastical use, the Prayer Book Psalter might seem at first sight to be the most fitting Version to adopt, yet, as it is not always a critically correct Translation, an inconveniently frequent modification of its renderings would be necessary. Its free and flowing style moreover can hardly be said to represent the terse vigour, or the occasionally abrupt transitions of the Hebrew Psalmists.

The Text presented in the following pages is a composite one. The ordinary student is in possession of two Versions, and has probably a familiar acquaintance with the one contained in the Prayer Book, and a less accurate knowledge of the one to be found in the Bible. From these two Versions the Text which follows is taken. Its basis is the Version of 1611, but the renderings of the Prayer Book Version have been occasionally adopted. Free use also has been made of the marginal renderings of the Bible Version, while its italicized

words, frequently needless, and sometimes incorrect interpolations, have been as freely omitted. Lastly, it will be noticed that the order of the words of the Version of 1611 has been largely modified. A desire that the Text should remain in the wording of Translations more or less familiar, and yet be conformed as nearly as possible to the Versions of modern critical Commentators, must be pleaded as a justification for these various alterations. "Let a translator," wrote Bishop Jebb, "only be literal, and as far as the genius of his language will permit, let him preserve the original order of the words, and he will infallibly put the reader in possession of all, or nearly all, that the Hebrew Text can give to the best Hebrew Scholar."

The arrangement of this book endeavours to carry out the following scheme. After some pages dealing with Preliminary Matter with which it is desirable that the Student should have some acquaintance, the reader is presented with an account of the Historical Circumstances, either evidently or conjecturally connected with each Psalm as it occurs. After this will be found a brief Analysis of its Structure, and a Summary of its Contents, together with a reference to its selection for Ecclesiastical Use. After some remarks upon each Inscription, the Text, just described, is given. Immediately subjoined are references to Critical Commentaries, and to various Versions, which support by their authority the omissions, the borrowings, the insertions, and the transpositions to which they severally relate, and which occasionally supply the reader with other, and more critically accurate renderings of the Original. Notice is taken in the Explanatory Notes of the few instances in which the Text given requires to be replaced by an absolutely new rendering. A list of New Testament References follows, after which are placed various Explanatory Notes. In these verbal, mostly precede historical explanations, and these again more general ones, or such as endeavour to indicate the train of thought. Any Messianic Reference is then pointed out, and occasionally an allusion is made to the comments of the

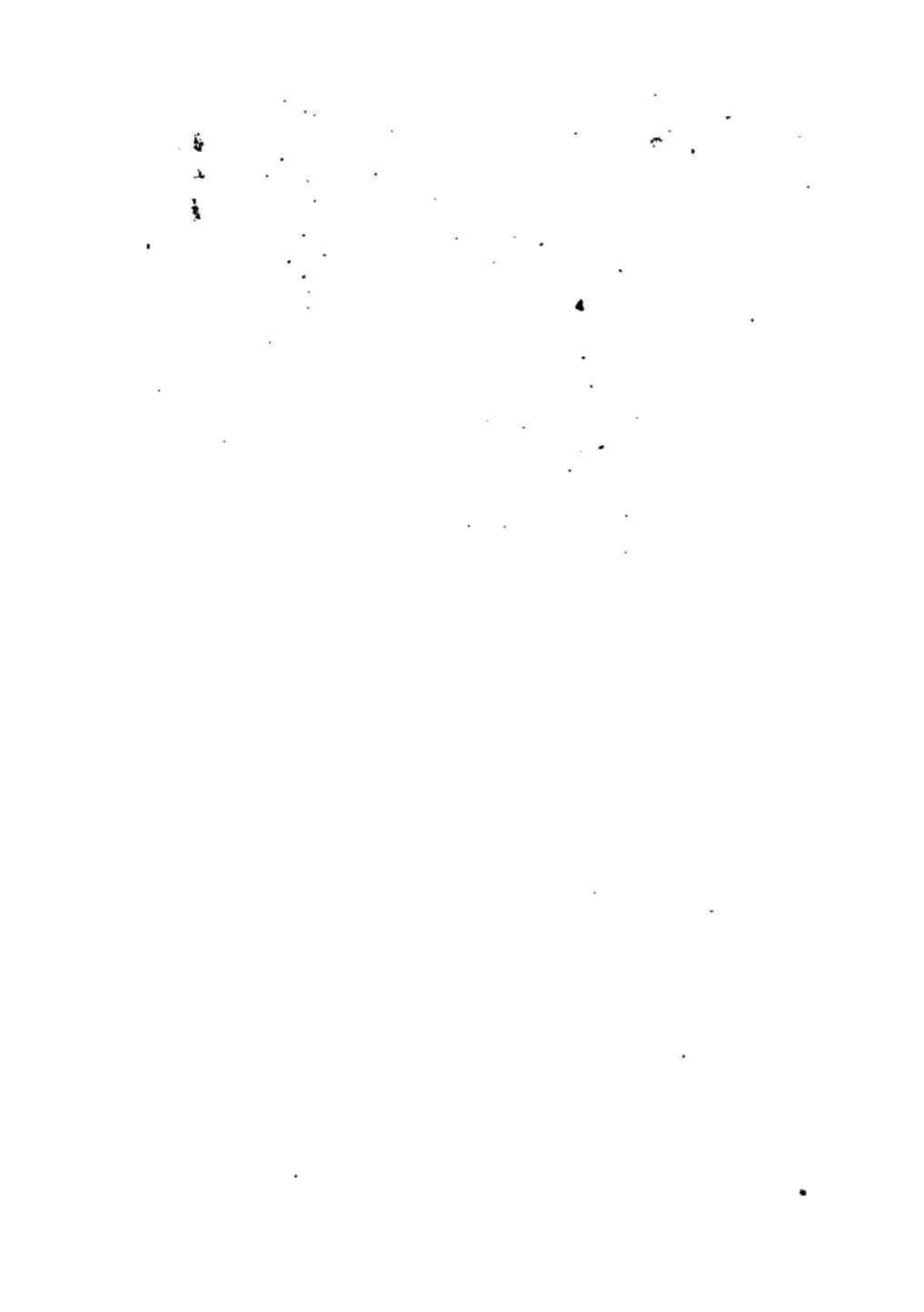
**Mystical Interpreters.** The references made in these Notes to passages in the New Testament, will frequently be found to illustrate the Mystical method of Interpretation. An historical outline of the circumstances to which the *Proper Psalms* have been severally supposed to refer, is given in one Appendix, and in another an endeavour has been made to point out the connection between these Psalms and the Days on which they are to be used.

It is needless to say that the writer is under the greatest obligation to the works of numerous authorities on the subject. But, patent as the fact may be to some who may scan the following pages, fitting acknowledgment should be made here of continual indebtedness to writers such as Perowne and Kay, to Commentaries such as the Speaker's, and Bishop Wordsworth's, to the volumes of Neale, Littledale, and Spurgeon, and to the critical labours of Delitzsch, Lange, Hengstenberg, Stier, Hupfield, Hitzig, and others. To use the words of the late Dean Alford, "the matter must be understood to be "gathered from all sources, to which time and opportunity "have afforded access."

G. W. W.

*Bickerstaffe, February 14th, 1884.*





Some commentators see a clue to this division into Five Books in the character of the Inscriptions, some in the use of different Divine Names, some in the internal character of the Psalms themselves. The First Book was probably collected by Solomon, and consists of his father's compositions. The use in it of the Divine Name *Jehovah* is constant, and the exceptions are but few. The Second Book, of which the predominant use of *Elohim* is characteristic, contains, besides its other Psalms, a supplementary series of the Psalms of David, and was probably collected at a little later period than the preceding one. The Third Book is made up of two minor collections, one attributed to Asaph, the other to the Sons of Korah. Its compilation is attributed to the "men of Hezekiah," and its use of the names *Jehovah* and *Elohim* is all but nearly equal. The Fourth Book may have been collected about the same time, or possibly at a later period. The Divine Name *Jehovah* is the only one which it employs. The Fifth Book contains a yet further collection of David's compositions, besides those of other authors. It employs the Divine Name *Jehovah* in preference, and its use of *Elohim* is infrequent. This final collection or recension belongs probably to the time of Ezra or Nehemiah. The word *Selah* does not occur in it. While it is possible to assign an approximate date to each separate Book, it is more difficult to decide upon the principle which governed the arrangement of their contents. Chronological order appears to have been disregarded, and the sequence of the Psalms to have been regulated by the similarity of their subjects, and in some instances by their verbal resemblances.

Although the Psalter has been spoken of as the Jewish Hymn-book for Temple use, the Christian

Church has ever largely employed it in her worship. The Psalms, however, for the Christian Seasons have been taken to a much greater extent from some of the Books than from others. The First Book, so largely descriptive of David's varied spiritual experiences, furnishes eleven *Proper Psalms*. The Second Book supplies seven; the Third, three; the Fourth, two only; while from the Fifth, ten are selected.

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## THE INSCRIPTIONS OF THE PSALMS.

The Inscriptions, or Headings of the Psalms, may be divided into three groups. One, the simplest in its character, contains those Headings which assign the Psalms to which they are prefixed to some particular author. Another group comprises the Inscriptions which describe the circumstances which bore upon the composition of the several Psalms, or denote the object for which they were to be employed. The third, in which several untranslated words occur, has given rise to much discussion. Some critics and commentators see in the Hebrew words which the Translators of 1611 have left unrendered, musical directions only. These, they contend, refer either to the selection of a melody, to the description of instrument required, to the quality of the voices to be employed, or to the musical pitch, or appropriate expression. Those who uphold this view point out, as in accordance with their theory, that the name of the precentor or conductor is placed first, then the name of the melody (perhaps the opening words of

some other composition) to which the Psalm was to be sung (as a hymn might now be directed to be sung to *Adeste fideles*), and, lastly, the character of the instrumental accompaniment, in the same way as an organ score may indicate the "stops" to be drawn, or a musician speak of employing the "wood," or the "brass," or the "strings." Their opponents rejoin that the names of these instruments, if such they are, occur nowhere else in Scripture.

It is contended, on the other hand, that the Inscriptions form an integral part of the Hebrew Scriptures, and that the Jewish practice of counting them as the first verse of their respective Psalms, and the extension to them of the system of accents, are arguments in favour of the assertion. The advocates of this opinion regard the Inscriptions as having a mystical reference to the subjects of the Psalms which follow them, and consequently consider their obscurity not only as natural, but as possibly intentionally enigmatic. Some critics adduce 2 Sam. i. 18 as a case in point, and consider "the bow" there spoken of to be the title of David's lament over Saul and Jonathan as commemorative both of the "bow of Jonathan" and of Saul being "sore wounded of the archers." Although opinion is divided as to the interpretation of the Inscriptions, it is on the whole favourable to their antiquity.

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#### UNTRANSLATED WORDS IN THE PSALMS.

It will be found that it has been thought preferable to deal with the untranslated words in the Inscriptions as they severally occur, and to refer when they

are subsequently met with to the explanations previously given. One word, however, which is left untranslated is found, not in the Inscriptions, but in various positions in a Psalm, and even at its close. This word, *Selah*, has been the subject of numerous, varied, and even irreconcileable explanations. The *Targum* interprets it as meaning "for ever," as though it was intended to point out that the passage to which it is appended is a truth for all time. The *Septuagint* employs in its place a word of which both the meaning and etymology are alike obscure, and which throws no light on the meaning of the Hebrew expression. Neither the Versions, the Fathers, nor the Rabbis are agreed among themselves as to its interpretation, while the *Vulgate* suppresses it entirely. The opinion most generally entertained by modern critics is, that it is a musical direction. *Piano*, *forte*, and *da capo* have each their advocates as its equivalent. The explanation which has most in its favour is, that *Selah* conveys a direction to the choir to be silent while a musical interlude, or a *cadenza* was played, for which the verses immediately preceding had supplied a "motive."

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#### THE POETICAL STRUCTURE OF THE PSALMS.

The language of a writer may be poetical in the extreme, but so long as it is unmetrical it fails to rank as poetry. The poetry of the Greeks and Romans, though devoid of rhyme, was subject to the laws of well-defined metres based upon syllabic quantity. Our modern poetry conforms to metrical

rules in which accented syllables play a conspicuous part, and has introduced in many instances a new feature in the subordination of its form to rhyme. It is generally agreed that certain portions of the Hebrew Scriptures, more especially the Psalms, are poetical as distinguished from prose compositions. The form of Hebrew poetry, however, has been the subject of endless discussion. The absence of rhyme is conspicuous, the character of the rhythm is controverted. The system of Hebrew accentuation, were it not in itself obscure, might throw light upon the matter, but beyond the conclusion that its functions were partly musical, partly metrical, and partly grammatical, little is known respecting it. Some have even held that any systematic rules of Hebrew poetry have remained undiscovered, for the reason that no system has ever been in existence. This, however, amounts to an assertion that Hebrew literature consists exclusively of prose. A more satisfactory opinion is that the guiding principle lay in the juxtaposition balance or contrast of thoughts expressed in sentences, rather than in the arrangement of their wording in accordance with syllabic considerations.

This view has the obvious argument in its favour that poetry possessing such a form, and cast into such a mould, is truthfully reproducible in any language. Many have been the attempts successfully to render Homer into English verse. A kind of ballad metre, the stately march of blank verse, the melodious sequence of rhyming couplets, and the Spenserian stanza have each been employed in turn, but in each the spirit of Homer's hexameters is wanting. The characteristic quality of Hebrew poetry, if it lies in the collocation of sense, and not of sound, or quantity,

will be fairly retained in every careful translation, from which harmony of diction need not by any means be excluded. Whether such a collocation is conveyed to the ear by the means of a system of accents, or to the eye by the adoption of an arrangement of parallelisms, is of secondary importance. The modern device of linear parallelisms throws into sufficiently marked relief a metrical system based apparently upon sentences rather than on words.

In some cases the parallelism is synonymous, that is, when allied thoughts are clothed in equivalent, yet different words. More rarely it is antithetic, when a thought or fact is contrasted with the expression of its opposite. Occasionally it is constructive, and consists in a careful correspondence between the grammatical forms of its members. A numerical character is sometimes given by an equal allotment of words to each portion of the verse, or an alphabetical one by each verse, or group of consecutive verses, commencing with the letters of the alphabet in order. Nor is the parallelism at all times simple in its construction, but the thoughts are placed at ordered distances apart, yet respond to one another, and form a symmetrical whole, somewhat in the manner in which a sonnet displays a series of intricately adjusted rhymes. Continuity of subject is marked by the verses falling naturally into a group or stanza, while transitions of thought are in most cases discernible in the formation of a new series dependent upon the new theme, or grouped around it as a new centre. The whole subject is surrounded with difficulties, and the key to the precise character, to say nothing of the minor details, of Hebrew poetry has been long, perhaps irrecoverably, lost.

THE MESSIANIC, AND MYSTICAL  
INTERPRETATION OF THE PSALMS.

The question, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself or of some other man?" cannot fail to present itself to the mind of the student of the Psalter. The true answer must be in this case, of himself and yet of another. Many of the Psalms of David, for instance, accurately depict his spiritual and even bodily condition at some given period which can be ascertained with historical certainty. And yet, in the midst of details in every way compatible with his actual position, expressions occur which are entirely inapplicable either to the circumstances or to the person of David. The Psalmist appears at times to be carried outside the circle of his own experiences. He describes his sufferings in language, which, however forcibly it may pourtray the bitterness of his anguish, is literally, inappropriate to himself. His picture of a Man of Sorrows is one of which One Sufferer only could be the subject. Or, he dwells on the glory of a future kingdom in terms which convince us that a greater than Solomon is intended, or describes a superhuman sovereignty, such as could belong to Him only Who should be King of kings and Lord of lords. But, while we allow that such expressions are unsuitable if limited to the actual circumstances of the writer, we may still perceive that they have been overruled to set forth verities of which the Psalmist himself was all unconscious. The cartoon, when seen in the studio of the artist, may appear to be too positive in its colouring or too bold in its foreshortening, but we

recognise the harmony of its tints and the truth of its drawing when we look up into the soaring vault at the finished fresco. As we read the Psalter with Him in our thoughts Whom David in spirit called Lord, a glory steals upon the page, and the Psalter, as it has well been said, becomes transfigured before us.

The faithful Jew, whether he lived in the days of the Monarchy, or sat by the waters of Babylon, or laboured at the rebuilding of the Temple, was persuaded of the unchangeableness of the Divine Covenant. From amidst the gloomiest surroundings he looked forward to the Coming of a future and ideal David of whose kingdom there should be no end. In the Psalms he left behind him the record of his hopes, and the Rabbis, into whose hands they came, enlarged upon the theme in a sympathetic strain of systematic comment.

But while these Jewish hopes were centred on the setting up of a temporal sovereignty, the Christian Church recognised, in the founding of a spiritual kingdom, the fulfilment of these earlier Messianic longings. At one period of her history, and that an early one, a method of interpreting Scripture which received the name of the *Mystical*, was elaborated into an accepted science. It dealt with the whole of Scripture after the manner of S. Paul when he said "Which things are an allegory," and in apparently merely historical circumstances it discerned "a figure." In the Scriptures of the Older Dispensation it descried, as in a glass darkly, the doctrines, the sacraments, and the polity of the New. Going yet further, it affixed mystical meanings to various words, and then, dealing with them as new factors, arrived,

by a process which may seem arbitrary, at a result which was, nevertheless, consistent. Although the Translations, which were at the time relied upon, may have been shown by modern criticism to have afforded but an insecure basis, and although the system of interpretation which rested upon them may seem to have made too wide a departure from the simple and historical, still the method of interpretation followed by these early commentators displayed, if not a critical faculty, nevertheless a deep spiritual insight, and possessed a beauty which was peculiarly its own. To interpret the Psalms with a faultless grammatical accuracy, and yet only as if they possessed but a bare historical value, is alien to the spirit of the comments both of the Jewish and early Christian Church, and disregards His example, Who expounded in the Psalms as in all the Scriptures, the things concerning Himself.

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#### THE DIVINE NAMES EMPLOYED IN THE PSALMS.

Two of the Names of the Divine Being, *Jehovah* and *Elohim*, have been held by some commentators to indicate, by their employment in the Psalter, the period of the composition of certain groups of Psalms. Close investigation leads to the conclusion that such a supposition is untenable. As *Jehovah* is used not unfrequently in Genesis, the assertion made in Ex. vi. 3, must be limited to mean that the Patriarchs, although they were acquainted with that Holy

Name, were in ignorance of its mysterious significance as pointing to the Ever-living, Self-existent nature of the Godhead. It was as such a Personal and Holy Being that God was pleased to reveal Himself on entering into a covenant with Israel. By the surrounding nations the Name came to be regarded as that merely of a local and national Deity. The true pronunciation of the name which we now write as *Jehovah* has long been lost. Its use, according to some Jewish traditions, was confined to the priestly blessings, and the extreme reverence in which it was held was the cause of its utterance being carefully avoided on all other occasions. When it appeared in writing the vowel-points of other of the Divine Names were used in connection with it, in order both to conceal its proper sound and to indicate that the Name to which they properly belonged was to be used instead. It is now generally agreed that *Jehovah* is not its true sound, and *Yahavah* and *Yahveh*, or *Yahve*, have each their advocates.

*Elohim*, is a title expressive of power and creative energy, and is applied to God as Creator and Preserver, and the Giver of all the blessings of this life. It was used of the Gods many and Lords many of the heathen world, though some expositors have seen in its plural form a foreshadowing of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. These two Divine Names are employed in the Psalter in such a manner as to impress and emphasize the truth that *Jehovah*, the Covenant God of Israel, was the God of the whole earth, and that beside Him there was no other *Elohim*, and that He it was in truth whom the heathen ignorantly worshipped. *Jehovah* as *Elohim*

## 12 VERSIONS OF, AND COMMENTARIES UPON, PSALMS.

is set forth as both the God of Nature and of Grace, Whose sovereignty should one day be universally acknowledged, when "all the ends of the world" should fear Him.

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### VERSIONS OF, AND COMMENTARIES UPON, THE PSALMS.

The Translation of the Old Testament into Greek, which is known as the *Septuagint*, was undertaken about B.C. 280. According to popular tradition, the work was undertaken by seventy translators with the view of supplying the Alexandrian Library with a Greek Version of the Hebrew Scriptures. Around this simple statement grew up a number of legendary embellishments, which were accepted by S. Augustine and entirely discarded by S. Jerome. Another account knows nothing of seventy translators, in fact the only statement which possesses any historical value is that the translation was made at Alexandria. The *Septuagint*, whether so named from its supposed translators, or from the approval supposed to have been bestowed upon it by the seventy members of the Sanhedrim, is of great value from a critical point of view. It indicates the state of the Hebrew text at the time of its translation as contained in manuscripts of earlier date than those which were afterwards in the hands of the Masoretic Doctors.

The reduction of the oral traditions relating to the Hebrew Text into the written form which received the name of the *Masorah*, or "Tradition," was a

process carried on by Jewish Doctors during a period extending probably from the sixth to about the tenth century. The *Masorah* records the readings with which they were acquainted, the corrections of the Text which seemed desirable to them, and other emendations of a more conjectural character. The vowel-points and the system of accents were introduced in it, of which the former preserves the traditional pronunciation of the text, while the latter indicates its rhythmical and grammatical structure.

During the Babylonish Captivity, the Hebrew language fell into disuse, and, ceasing to be the vernacular, the common people lost all knowledge of the tongue in which their Scriptures were written. As a consequence of this, a class of men sprung up who acted as the public interpreters of Scripture. The passage of the Hebrew which the Reader whispered into their ear they proclaimed aloud in the Aramaic, which had become the "vulgar tongue," either in a translation more or less close, or with the freedom of a paraphrase. This *Targum*, a word which may be explained as "Translation," was at first restricted to being oral, until a fear lest some corruption of the Scriptures should creep in, led to its being committed to writing. The word *Targum* has subsequently come to be loosely applied to the expositions of various Rabbinical writers.

Besides the *Septuagint*, we possess, in the remains of the *Hexapla* of Origen, some fragments of the Greek Version of Aquila, made in the second century, and of those subsequently made by Theodotion and Symmachus.

Before the end of the third century a Version known as the *Old Latin* was current in North Africa,

and a European revision of it was in use in the fourth century in North Italy. About the year 383 S. Jerome produced from this, or some other kindred version, a revision of the Psalter which gained the title, from the place of its production, of the *Roman Psalter*. A still more accurate translation, which S. Jerome put forth about 387, was introduced into France by Gregory of Tours, and gained the name of the *Gallican Psalter*. Its popularity became so great that it secured a place in the *Vulgate*, the name given to the Version in the Latin tongue, which S. Jerome made in every other case from the original languages. The English Version of the Psalter in *Cranmer's Bible* of 1539, which was made from the *Gallican Psalter*, is still retained in our Prayer Book, but the corrections of various mistranslations which occur in the Latin *Vulgate* show that it must have been compared with the Original Hebrew.

The Psalter has ever been a favourite subject with commentators. In the Christian Church, the Fathers of the earlier centuries were succeeded by an array of mediæval expositors, while at a later date Calvin stands pre-eminent at the head of a long list of writers. More recently a more strictly critical line of commentators have added the results of their labours to the stores of expository matter and homiletical application already in existence.

## Proper Psalms on Certain Days..

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### PSALM II.

(*EASTER-DAY, MATTINS.*)

**The History.**—It is impossible to decide as to the event which formed the historical basis of this Psalm. It evidently refers to some confederacy, the object of which was rebellion. The Rabbis consider it to refer to the Philistines, who, enraged at the anointing of David as King over Israel, made the attack recorded in 2 Sam. v. 17-21. Others see in it an allusion to the confederacy of the Children of Ammon with the Syrians, when the Aramaic tribes, even from beyond Jordan, made the effort to regain their independence which led to David's greatest war (2 Sam. x. 6-14, 1 Chron. xix. 7-15). The alliance of Syria with Israel to take "evil counsel" against Judah in the days of Ahaz, seems to be excluded by the impossibility of regarding it as a revolt (2 Kings xvi. 5, Isa. vii. 1-9. Solomon, Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 6-8). Hezekiah, and Zerubbabel, have each been brought forward in connection with this Psalm, but these suggestions are improbable ones.

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm exhibits a great regularity of structure. It consists of four stanzas, the *first*, verses 1-3, describes, with amazement, the planned revolt of the allies, and ends with the *exclamations* by which they express their determination, The *second* predicts their overthrow, and contains Jehovah's proclamation of the Messiah, verses 4-6. In the *third*, verses 7-9, the Messiah announces the decree of Jehovah. In the *fourth*, verses 10-12, the Psalmist himself addresses the confederates with the language of dissuasion. The Psalm has always been held to be Messianic. It occurs in the Gregorian Use for Easter, of which the seventh verse is interpreted.

**The Inscription.**—This Psalm is anonymous, and without any Inscription. The Talmudists called such Psalms “orphans.” In Acts iv. 25, it is attributed to David.

1. Why do the heathen rage<sup>1</sup> ;  
And the people meditate a vain thing ?
2. The kings of the earth set themselves,  
And the rulers take counsel together,  
Against the LORD and against His Anointed ;
3. “Let us break asunder their bands  
“And cast away from us their cords.”
4. He that sitteth<sup>2</sup> in the heavens shall laugh,  
The Lord shall have them in derision.
5. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath,  
And trouble<sup>3</sup> them in His sore displeasure ;
6. “Yet, I have set<sup>4</sup> my King  
“On Zion, the hill of my holiness.

7. I will declare<sup>5</sup> the decree ;  
The L ORD hath said unto me—" My Son art thou,  
" I, this day have begotten Thee.
8. " Ask of Me  
" And I shall give the heathen for Thine inheritance,  
" And the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession.
9. " Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron,  
" Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."
10. Now, therefore, O ye kings, be wise ;  
Be instructed, ye judges of the earth !
11. Serve the L ORD with fear,  
And rejoice with trembling ;
12. Kiss the Son<sup>6</sup>, lest He be angry and ye perish from the way :  
When<sup>7</sup> His wrath is kindled but a little,  
Blessed are all they that put their trust<sup>8</sup> in Him !

**Critical References.**—1, *furiously rage*, Prayer Book Version ; *make an uproar*, Kay ; *raged tumultuously*, Perowne. 2, *who is enthroned*, Delitzsch. 3, *terrify them*, Perowne. 4, *consecrated*, Kay ; *anointed*, Ewald ; *yet have I been set, a King*, Septuagint, Vulgate. 5, *tell*, Kay, Perowne. 6, *take hold of instruction*, Targum, Septuagint, Vulgate ; *submit yourselves sincerely*, Hupfield ; *worship purely*, S. Jerome ; *kiss, &c.*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch, Hitzig. 7, *lit. for*. 8, *find refuge*, Perowne ; *take refuge*, Kay ; *hide*, Delitzsch.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 1, 2, *Why do, &c.*, Acts iv. 25-26. 2, *His Anointed*, S. Matt. xxvi. (3, S. Jno. i. 41 ; 6, *my king*, S. Jno. i. 49, Rev. xi. 15-17. 7, *My Son*, S. Matt. xxvi. 63, S. Jno. i. 49, Acts xiii. 33, Rom. i. 4, Col. i. 18, 1 Thess. i. 10, Heb. i. 5. 9, *rod of iron*, Rev. ii. 27, xii. 5.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *Why, &c.* The Psalm opens with a question which expresses the Psalmist's astonishment at such a useless attempt at rebellion; *vain*, impossible to be executed; *meditate*, plan, or devise. 2, *kings, &c.*, this refers to the revolt (most probably against David), prophetically to the Roman power and the Jewish rulers, and equally to all outbursts against the Church of Christ, from the early persecutions down to the present time (S. Luke xix, 14, S. Jno. xix, 15); *set themselves*, take up a position of determined hostility, act with a fixed purpose, *take counsel*, deliberate, with a view to concerted action. *Against the LORD, &c.*, it is the thought of Him against whom they seek to rebel, which impresses the Psalmist with the folly of their design. *His Anointed*, this expression was used of the kings of Israel (2 Sam. xix, 21), whose royalty was a type of the true kingship of the Messiah. 3, *Let us break, &c.*, the Psalmist hears, as it were, the very words in which the rebellious kings avow their purpose of casting off all control. The word is expressive of the action of a restive animal (Isa. x. 27, Jer. xxx. 8, Nah. i. 13). 4, *Sitteth*, the Psalmist's gaze is turned away from the tumultuous assemblage, to Him who sits enthroned in unmoved dignity; *laugh*, “not,” says S. Augustine, to be taken as “in a carnal sort,” but as expressing a knowledge of the folly of their efforts. 5, *Then*, in the very midst of their plotting. 6, *Yet, &c.*, the words of Jehovah are recorded, “I, notwithstanding the clamour of the rulers, have, for my part, set my king, &c.”; *set*, the thought is taken from the process of casting molten metal, which “sets” firmly. Some would see in it an allusion to the “pouring” of the consecrating oil; *my*

*king* (S. Mark xv. 1-2), the Septuagint and Vulgate read this, as spoken by Messiah, "Yet have I been," &c.; *Zion*, where David sat enthroned after many perils. Zion was to be the place from which Messiah's rule should be exercised (Heb. xii, 22). 7, *I will declare*, &c., Messiah is now introduced as speaking; He will proclaim the text of the decree by virtue of which he reigns. The decree extends to the end of verse 9. A like declaration was made at Our Lord's Baptism and Transfiguration; *My Son*, &c., He was the Son from eternity, "begotten, not made," in time, in His humanity, "made of a woman;" He became at His Resurrection, the first-born from the dead (Col. i. 18). The Resurrection was the starting-point of the Kingdom. This is the key to the Easter use of the Psalm. 8, *Ask of Me*, Messiah is still quoting the decree of Jehovah by which He receives the world as His Kingdom (S. Matt. xxviii. 18); *Thou shalt*, &c., the decree of Jehovah is still continued, though some think this to be an address of the Psalmist's to Messiah before turning to speak to the rebels (S. Luke xix. 27); *of iron*, as indicating irresistible power. The Roman Empire (Dan. ii. 40) was the rod of iron by which the Jewish people was bruised and broken. 10, *Now, therefore*, &c., the Psalmist closes with an address to the kings and rulers, he counsels them, seeing how useless is the struggle against the power of Jehovah committed to the Messiah, to be wise in time. 12, *Kiss the Son*, &c., as a sign of doing homage (1 Sam. x. 1); it was also a token of worship (1 Kings xix. 18, Hos. xiii. 2). The usual word for "son" *Ben* (as found in Ben-oni, son of my sorrow), is not used, but the Chaldaic form *Bar* (as in Bar-Jona), (Dan. vii. 13); *lest He*, many refer this not to the Son, but to Jehovah (Heb. i. 6).

## PSALM VI.

(ASH-WEDNESDAY, MATTINS.)

**The History.**—No clue is to be found in this Psalm as to the circumstances under which it was composed, though it has been suggested that it was written when David first quitted the court of Saul. It was evidently written at a time of great spiritual depression and probably of failing health, possibly occasioned by his sense of his undeserved wrongs. It may, however, belong to the period of that dangerous sickness, through which, from several allusions in the Psalms, David appears at some time to have passed, although no account of it is preserved in the Historical Books.

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm consists of Three Stanzas. *The First*, verses 1-3, is a cry for mercy, based on the misery of the sufferer. *The Second*, verses 4-7, appeals to God's mercies, and further describes his wretched condition. *The Third*, verses 8-10, is an expression of assurance that his prayer has been heard. The Psalm was reckoned by the Jews as the first of the seven Penitential Psalms (Pss. vi., xxxii., xxxviii., li., cii., cxxx., cxlii.), and has been adopted from an early period for the Church's Lenten use.

**The Inscription.**—The Temple Musicians appear to have been divided into companies, each under the control of an experienced Precentor, or Conductor “the chief Musician,” one of the sons of Heman, Asaph, or Ethan, to whose care either the musical setting or the execution of the Psalm was entrusted.

Such a leader is here described as the “chief Musician, on *Neginoth*.” This latter word seems to be a term including every kind of stringed instrument, whether of the character of the harp, zithern, guitar, or even violin (though it is doubtful whether at that period a bow was ever employed to elicit sound). *Sheminith* is supposed by most of the Rabbinical writers to refer to an eight-stringed harp. Others render it by “on the eighth,” or Octave, which they consider to be the bass, or lower octave. Some modern critics think that bass stringed instruments (such as the violincello is now) are intended. Another suggestion is that it indicates the use of a certain tone, in the same way as the “Eighth Tone” is directed in a Gregorian Psalter. Every explanation is at the best but conjectural. There is no reason to doubt David’s authorship.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth upon Sheminith,  
A Psalm of David.

1. O LORD, rebuke me not in Thine anger,  
Neither chasten me<sup>1</sup> in Thy displeasure.
2. Have mercy upon me O LORD, for I am weak;<sup>2</sup>  
Heal me O LORD, for my bones are vexed;
3. My soul also is sore troubled;<sup>3</sup>  
But Thou O LORD, how long ?
4. Return, O LORD, deliver my soul,  
Oh save me for Thy mercies’ sake.
5. For in death is no remembrance of Thee,  
In the grave<sup>4</sup> who shall give Thee thanks ?
6. I am weary with my groaning ;  
All the night I wash<sup>5</sup> my bed,  
I water<sup>6</sup> my couch with my tears.
7. Mine eye is consumed<sup>7</sup> because of grief,  
It waxeth old,<sup>8</sup> because of all mine enemies.

8. Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity,  
For the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping:
9. The LORD hath heard my supplication,  
The LORD will receive my prayer.
10. All my enemies shall be ashamed<sup>9</sup> and sore vexed:  
They shall return and be ashamed suddenly.

**Critical References.**—1, *correct*, Kay, Perowne. 2, *withered away*, Kay; *I languish*, Perowne; *fading away*, Delitzsch. 3, Prayer Book Version, Kay; *terrified*, Perowne. 4, *in Hades*, Kay; *the unseen world*, Perowne. 5, Prayer Book Version, *I drench*, Kay. 6, *I dissolve*, Kay; *flood*, Delitzsch. 7, *wasteth away*, Perowne. 8, *is decayed*, Perowne. 9, Prayer Book Version, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 8, *Depart from me*, S. Matt. vii. 23. xxv. 41.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1. “Jehovah” is used throughout the Psalm. The Psalmist confesses that he deserved both rebuke and chastisement: it is not these which he deprecates; but he prays that the one may not be administered in anger nor the other in displeasure, but that they may be a fatherly correction and a loving chastisement. 2, *weak*, as a drooping plant; *my bones*, my whole bodily frame (Job iv. 14, xxx. 17, 30). 3, *My soul*, that also was dismayed (S. Jno. xii. 27); *how long?* from sheer exhaustion he leaves his sentence incomplete. The Prayer Book addition is without any authority. 4, *Return, &c.*, he speaks as though God had withdrawn Himself; *for Thy, &c.*, notwithstanding his manifold sins, he rests his prayer on God’s manifold and great mercies. 5, *For in death, &c.*, the Psalmist

pleads further, that praise is acceptable to God, yet how could it be offered in the grave ? The spiritually-minded Jew even had not learned to say, "O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ?" The most obvious truth to him was "the living, the living, he shall praise Thee." 7, *because of grief*, which arose from the depth of his repentance, and partly from the malice of his enemies. 8, *Depart, &c.*, having sorrowed after a godly sort, the assurance that his prayer has been heard springs up within him, and he concludes the Psalm with joyful hope ; *voice*, Eastern sorrow is rarely silent (S. Matt. ix. 23). *The LORD*, Num. vi. 24-26, has a like threefold repetition. That he was heard was itself an assurance that he would be answered, and wrought a conviction that his enemies would be dispersed.

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## PSALM VIII.

(ASCENSION-DAY, MATTINS.)

**The History.**—Some attribute this Psalm to David's youth, but although much of its language may have been suggested by the experiences of his shepherd-life, it may, nevertheless, have been composed for the use of the Temple-choir, at a later period.

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm is a continuous strain setting forth the praise of *Jehovah*. The contemplation of the heavens throws out in strong relief the apparent littleness of man in comparison

with the grandeur of the material universe. Still, the consideration of Man as endowed with his Paradisaical powers leads to the conclusion (ver. 5) that he is God's chiefest work, crowned with glory and honour. This union of humiliation and glory was to be finally realised only in the Son of David who "ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things." Hence it occurs in the Gregorian Use, for Ascension Day.

**The Inscription.**—For "to the chief Musician," see on the Inscription of Ps. VI. *Gittith*, appears to be the name of a musical instrument used on joyous occasions. It is thought to be connected with a word meaning "hollow." The Chaldee Targum, however, paraphrases it as "the instrument which David brought from Gath," and some in consequence consider it to indicate a Gittite instrument, or melody. The Septuagint, following a suggestion found in the Talmud, renders it "for the wine-presses." This may mean "a vintage song," or be an allusion to the "wine press of the wrath of God" but does not as an explanation meet with approval from Jewish scholars.

To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm of David.

1. O LORD, our Lord,  
How excellent is Thy Name in all the earth !  
Who hast set Thy glory<sup>1</sup> above the heavens.
2. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast  
Thou founded<sup>2</sup> strength,  
Because of Thine enemies,  
That Thou mightest still the enemy and the  
avenger.

3. When I consider<sup>3</sup> Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers,  
The moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained;
4. What is man that Thou art mindful of him,  
And the son of man that Thou visitest him ?
5. Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,<sup>4</sup>  
And with glory and honour hast Thou crowned<sup>5</sup> him.
6. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands ;  
All things hast Thou put under his feet ;
7. Sheep and oxen, all of them,  
Yea and the beasts of the field.
8. The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea,  
Whatsoever passeth through<sup>6</sup> the paths of the seas.
9. O LORD our Lord !  
How excellent is Thy Name in all the earth !

**Critical References.**—1, *mightest have set*, Perowne ; *O set Thou*, Kay ; *because of Thy setting*, Wordsworth's Commentary ; *whose glory is extended*, Ewald ; *is raised above*, Septuagint, Vulgate. 2, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 3, *behold*, Kay ; *see* Septuagint, Perowne. 4, *than ELOHIM*, Hebrew ; *lack but little of God*, Kay, Hengstenberg ; *a little lower than God*, Perowne ; *a little less than Divine*, Delitzsch, Speaker's Commentary ; 5, *crownedst*, Kay. 6, *travels along*, Kay.

**New Testament References.**—2, *babes*, S. Matt. xi. 25, xxi. 16. 4, *What, &c.*, Heb. ii. 6-8. 6, *under his feet*, 1 Cor. xv. 27, Eph. i. 22.

**Explanatory Notes.**—1, *O LORD, &c.*, the God of the Covenant is the “Maker of heaven and earth.” The Psalmist is speaking in the name of the Church. *Name*, a manifestation must be accompanied by a *Name*. *Who hast set, &c.*, not only upon earth is

Thy Name known, Thy glory is set above the heavens. Hence the Ascension-Day use of this Psalm (Eph. i. 21, iv. 10, Phil. ii. 9-11). 2, *babes, &c.*, both children and infants, to be understood both literally and spiritually (S. Matt. xxi. 15, 1 Cor. i. 27, 2 Cor. xii. 9); *founded strength*, the feeble cry of the infant which attracts the parents' care, is as strong a proof that the mercy of God is over all His works, as the heavens are of His glory; *still the enemy*, the arrogant one who avenges himself, the Arch-enemy (S. Matt. xxii. 34-46, S. Luke x. 18-19). 3, *When I, &c.*, that God should so love the world, and visit man, is a greater marvel than the creation of the heavens. *Thy fingers*, the work, not of the hand or arm, but merely of the fingers of Omnipotence. 4, *son of man*, the Messiah; *visitest*, every manifestation of God's power, whether for blessing or punishment, is a "visit" (Gen. xxi. 1, Ruth i. 6). 5, *angels*, the Hebrew *ELOHIM* is rendered "angels" by the Chaldee Targum, the Septuagint, and the Vulgate, and as such it is quoted in Heb. ii. 7. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews was addressing readers of the Septuagint, and the restricted application of the word served for the purpose of his argument. Modern Commentators see here a reference to the Human Nature in which the Messiah was "inferior to the Father, as touching his Manhood" (S. Jno. xiv. 28), "for the suffering of death." The reference is to Gen. i. 26. Man, fallen below his original condition in Adam, is raised above it in Christ (1 Cor. xv. 47, 2 Pet. i. 4). The Septuagint appears to understand it to mean, "for a little while lower." 6, *Thou madest, &c.*, the Psalmist is speaking of the original gift, which man has lost to a great degree. *All things*, created, that is so far as we can see them

(Col. i. 16), with regard to the things that “are in heaven,” they are invisible to us as yet, and consequently so far as they are concerned we are unable to see “all things put under Him.” 7, *beasts of the field* (S. Mark i. 13). 8, *fish of the sea* (S. Matt. xvii. 27). Ancient Expositors saw in the “sheep and oxen,” an allusion to the Jewish Church, the sheep of His pasture, and to the Gentile world in the “beasts of the field.” The “fowls” they interpreted of soaring intellects, the “fishes” of those who passed their life in a “sea of troubles” in “the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches.” 9, *O LORD, &c.*, the Psalmist concludes, after the contemplation of Christ in His humiliation, with an Ascription, which directs our thoughts to His exaltation, and to the new heavens, and the new earth.

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## PSALM XV.

(ASCENSION-DAY, MATTINS.)

**The History.**—This Psalm is generally supposed to refer to the removal of “the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David” (2 Sam. vi. 12). It may possibly belong to the period of David’s enforced absence from the Sanctuary during the continuance of Absalom’s rebellion (2 Sam. xv. 25).

**The Structure, &c.**—The structure of the Psalm is exceedingly simple. A question is proposed in the first verse, to which the remaining portion of the

Psalm furnishes the reply. The Gregorian Use appointed it for Easter-Day, we now employ it with reference to Ascension-Day.

**The Inscription.**—This simply states that the Psalm was one of the compositions of David.

A Psalm of David.

1. **LORD**, who shall sojourn<sup>1</sup> in Thy tabernacle ?  
Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill ?
2. He that walketh uprightly<sup>2</sup> and worketh righteousness  
And speaketh the truth in his heart.
3. He backbiteth<sup>3</sup> not with his tongue,  
Nor doeth ill to his neighbour,  
Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.
4. Contemned in whose eyes<sup>4</sup> is a vile person,  
But them that fear the **LORD** he honoureth ;  
He sweareth to his own hurt,<sup>5</sup> and changeth not.
5. He putteth not out his money to usury,  
Nor taketh reward against the innocent.  
He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

**Critical References.**—1, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 2, *perfectly*, Perowne. 3, *hath not slandered*, Perowne, Kay, Delitzsch. 4, Septuagint, Vulgate, Perowne, Hupfield ; *He that setteth not by himself*, Targum, Prayer Book Version ; *despised is he in his own eyes and worthless*. Kay, Hengstenberg, Hitzig, Delitzsch. 5, The Septuagint and Vulgate read instead “*to his neighbour*.”

**New Testament References.**—This Psalm furnishes no quotation in the New Testament.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *Sojourn*, for a season, during a wandering life, *in Thy tabernacle*, set up by David on Zion, the tent in which God received His

people, the “Church militant here in earth ;” *dwell*, as in a lasting abode, *in Thy holy hill*, the Church Triumphant, the “city which hath foundations.” In the Old Dispensation God’s presence was vouchsafed to a certain spot, the Apostles were to go into all the world with the promise, “Lo I am with you always.” **2**, *He that, &c.*, whose outward, habitual action springs from his inward spiritual state. Such an one is described by ten characteristic marks, by what he is, and by what he is not. His character toward his neighbour is dwelt upon as being manifest to all ; *backbiteth* (Lev. xix. 16). **4**, *Contemned, &c.* The accents favour the Prayer-Book Version, which is supported both by Versions and Expositors, but others uphold the Bible rendering ; *to his own hurt*, he carries out his pledged word, although the doing so may occasion him loss. The Rabbinical interpretation is “he fulfils his vows of afflicting himself,” as by fasting. The Prayer-Book Version is a paraphrase, partly following the Vulgate. **5**, *usury*, the lending of money at interest was forbidden to the Jews with respect to their brethren (Lev. xxv. 36, Deut. xxiii. 20) ; *nor taketh reward, &c.*, as a judge, he is not influenced by bribes to give a false decision, nor as a witness to give false testimony (Ex. xxiii. 6, Deut. xvi. 19, xxvii. 25, S. Matt. xxvii. 3, 4) ; *never be moved*, because the Lord is at his right hand (Ps. xvi. 8). Such as is their ascended Head, such must be His members (Col. iii. 1-10, Rev. xxii. 14, 15).

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## PSALM XIX.

(CHRISTMAS-DAY, MATTINS.)

**The History.**—This Psalm contains no internal marks which might serve to fix the date of its composition. The fact of David in his youth having kept watch over his flock by night may have suggested some of its imagery, but it is on the whole improbable that any of his Psalms were actually written at that early period. Some consider that the first portion, vers. 1-6, is an unfinished poem of the time of David, and that the latter part is a subsequent addition. The supposition is as needless as it is purely conjectural.

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm is divided into two parts, each consisting of fourteen members. The *First* portion, vers. 1-6, sets forth the glory of God as manifested by the heavens. The *Second* part, vers. 7-13, is occupied with the praises of the Law, the glory of God set forth in the revelation of His will. To this is subjoined, ver. 14, a short prayer of the Psalmist's, that his words may be acceptable to Jehovah. It is selected for Christmas use in both the Gregorian and Ambrosian Uses as suitable to the Day, when should “a greater sun appear.”

**The Inscription.**—See on Psalm VI.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

1. The heavens declare the glory of God,  
And the firmament sheweth His handiwork.<sup>1</sup>
2. Day unto day<sup>2</sup> uttereth speech,  
And night unto night sheweth knowledge.

3. There is no speech, nor language,<sup>3</sup>  
Their voice is not heard;<sup>4</sup>
4. Through all the earth their line<sup>5</sup> is gone out,  
And their words to the ends of the world.  
For the sun He hath set a tabernacle in them.
5. Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his  
chamber,  
And rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course.<sup>6</sup>
6. His going forth is from the end of the heaven ;  
And unto the ends of it his circuit ;  
And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.
7. The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul ;  
The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise  
the simple.
8. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the  
heart ;  
The commandment of the LORD is pure,  
enlightening the eyes.
9. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever ;  
The judgements of the LORD are truth, and  
righteous altogether.
10. More to be desired are they than gold yea than  
much fine gold,  
Sweeter also than honey and the droppings of  
honey-combs.<sup>7</sup>
11. Moreover thy servant is warned by them ;  
In keeping of them is great reward.
12. Errors—who can understand ?  
From secret faults cleanse Thou me !
13. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous  
sins,<sup>8</sup>  
Let them not have dominion over me ; then shall  
I be upright,  
And innocent from the great transgression.<sup>10</sup>

14. Let the words of my mouth be acceptable  
 And the meditations of my heart, in Thy sight ;  
 O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

**Critical References.**—1, *work of His hands*, Perowne, Kay. 2, or, *after day*, Perowne ; *day to day*, Kay, Delitzsch ; *one day telleth another*, Prayer Book Version. 3, *There is no speech, and no words*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 4, *All inaudible is their voice*, Kay, Perowne, Wordsworth's Commentary, Speaker's Commentary, Hengstenberg, Hupfield. 5, *measuring line*, Perowne, Wordsworth's Commentary, Delitzsch, Hengstenberg, Hupfield ; *chord*, Kay ; *sound*, Septuagint, Vulgate, Prayer Book Version. 6, Kay, Prayer Book Version. 7, Kay, Perowne. 8, Hebrew, “*things hidden*,” *deviations—discern?* Kay ; *errors—perceive them?* Perowne. 9, *the insolent ones*, Kay. 10, *from great transgression*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 2, *sheweth knowledge*, Rom. i. 19. 4, *their words*, Rom. x. 18.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *of God*, of the Creator (Rom. i. 20) ; *declare*, “are telling.” 2, *Day unto day, &c.*, day speaks to day, night to night, day communicates, night contemplates. 3, *There is no, &c.*, the “*where*,” of the Bible Version, although supported by the Old Expositors, is regarded by modern Commentators as being misleading. The Prayer-Book Version apparently takes the same view as that of 1611 and regards “*speech*,” and “*language*,” as equivalent to “*there is no nation*” (Dan. iii. 4, Zech. viii. 23). The Psalmist’s assertion is, that the heavens, and day and night (which he personifies), although they possess neither audible speech nor language, nor utter articulate sounds, still spread their message over all the earth. 4, *their line*, although this word occurs fifteen times, it would seem in each instance to refer

to a measuring-line. In this view most modern critics unite. Some consider it, indeed, to represent a string, but a string in a state of tension, and so capable of giving out a musical note, or "sound," which is the rendering of the Septuagint, Vulgate, and of the Old Expositors. "Sound" then completes the parallelism to "their words." S. Paul (Rom. x. 18) quotes from the Septuagint. His object was to assert that the Apostolic Commission, and the preaching of the Gospel, were to be co-extensive with the Manifestation of God by Nature (Gen. viii. 22, Rev. xiv. 6); the Word of His Grace, with the Word of His Works. For this purpose "line," or "sound" were equally suitable. The sense of "line" is, that they stretch their line (Job xxxviii. 5) over the whole earth (Hab. iii. 1-6), and by virtue of this universal measurement and appropriation of it, deliver their message everywhere, always, and to all; *a tabernacle*, the sun has his royal pavilion in the midst of his hosts. 5, *a bride-groom*, in his splendid marriage robes (Isa. lxi. 10), coming forth amid the blaze of torch-light to meet the bride (S. Matt. xxv. 6); *rejoiceth*, not, at having to run, but while he is running; *strong* (Judg. v. 31). 6, *going-forth*, starting-place; *heat*, the eyes may be closed against the light, but the heat can smite nevertheless. 7, *The law, &c.* The Psalmist now makes a sudden transition from the Works to the Words of God. He praises the Law of Jehovah in twelve sayings, which form six pairs, each composed of ten words. Six titles are bestowed upon the Law, to which six qualities are severally conjoined, and from which six results follow. The Law is spoken of as it is in itself (Rom. vii. 12), not as bringing, as the sinner is conscious in himself that it does, "the knowledge of

sin;" *testimony*, the Tables of the Law placed within the ark, are so called (Ex. xvi. 34, xxv. 16); *simple*, those who retain a childlike simplicity (S. Matt. xi. 25). 8, *enlightening, &c.*, the spiritual eye (S. Matt. v. 8, Eph. i. 18). 9, *The fear*, a name for the Law, which causes men to fear the Lord their God (Deut. xvii. 19, Jer. xxxi. 33, xxxii. 40, Heb. x. 16); *are truth*, have an unalterable moral basis; *altogether*, wholly. 10, *honey-combs*, the old Expositors saw here a parallel between these six praises of the Law and the six-sided cell of the honey-comb. 11, *In keeping, &c.*, that is now, not, for keeping of them there shall be (1 Tim. iv. 8). 12, *Errors*, the Psalmist speaks from his own personal experience of unintentional sins, sins of ignorance (1 Cor. iv. 4); *understand them*, because of the spirituality of the Law (Rom. viii. 7), of self-deception (S. Matt. xix. 20), and of the deceitfulness of sin. 13, *presumptuous*, those sins which spring neither from ignorance nor negligence are personified, as tyrannising over the soul, and exercising a dominant influence on the character; *innocent*, made and kept so; *great, &c.*, that which is my great transgression, my besetting sin. 14, *Let the words, &c.*, may the prayer which I have just uttered, and my praises of Thy Law, be as an acceptable sacrifice (Lev. i. 34); *in Thy sight*, let it not be only admired by men, as the production of a poet; *Redeemer*, first used in Gen. xlvi. 16, and employed of the near of kin, who could redeem a relative from bondage, or land which had been sold by reason of poverty (Lev. xxv. 25, 48, Heb. ii. 14, 15).

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## PSALM XXI.

(ASCENSION-DAY, MATTINS.)

**The History.**—Commentators are divided in opinion as to whether this Psalm, containing, as it does, both Prayer and Praise, is to be regarded as a Hymn before going into battle, praying with confident hope for victory, or as a “*Te Deum*,” sung at the triumphant return of the conqueror. Some consider it to belong to the time of the Ammonitish Syrian war (2 Sam. x. 6-14). Others see in it (ver. 3) a clear reference to Rabbah (2 Sam. xii. 29, 30). Yet another suggestion is, that it is a Coronation Anthem.

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm consists of Two Stanzas. The *First*, verses 1-7, is a prayer on behalf of the king, pervaded by the language of Thanksgiving for both past and present mercies. The *Second* portion, verses 8-12, is a congratulatory strain, addressed, either by Priest or People, to the King himself. To this is appended (ver. 13) a brief Prayer for the exaltation of Jehovah. The whole Psalm has ever been regarded as Messianic, and by the Christian Church as being typical of the exaltation at the Ascension, of “another King, one Jesus.” It occurs in the Gregorian Use for Ascension-Day.

**The Inscription.**—See on Psalm VI.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

1. O LORD, in Thy strength the King shall joy;<sup>1</sup>  
And in Thy salvation how greatly shall he  
rejoice;<sup>2</sup>

2. Thou hast given him his heart's desire,  
And the request of his lips hast not withholden.  
Selah.
3. For Thou preventest<sup>3</sup> him with the blessings of  
goodness,  
Thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.
4. He asked life of Thee:—Thou gavest it him,  
Even length of days for ever and ever.
5. Great is his glory in Thy salvation,  
Honour and majesty hast Thou laid<sup>4</sup> upon him.
6. For Thou hast set him to be blessings for ever.<sup>5</sup>  
Thou hast gladded him with joy with Thy coun-  
tenance.<sup>6</sup>
7. For the King trusteth in the LORD,  
And through the mercy of the Most High he  
shall not be moved.
8. Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies,  
Thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.
9. Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven<sup>7</sup> in the time  
of thine anger;<sup>8</sup>  
The LORD shall swallow them up in His wrath;  
and the fire shall devour them.
10. Their fruit shall thou destroy from the earth,  
And their seed from among the children of men.
11. For they intended evil<sup>9</sup> against thee;  
They imagined a mischievous device; they are  
not able to perform.<sup>10</sup>
12. Therefore thou shalt make them turn their back,  
Upon thy strings<sup>11</sup> thou shalt make ready against  
the face of them.
13. Be Thou exalted, LORD, in Thine own strength;  
So will we sing and praise Thy power.

**Critical References.**—1, *exult*, Kay, Perowne. 2, *he rejoices*, Hupfield, Hitzig, Delitzsch, Ewald. 3, *surprisest*, Kay; *comest to meet him with*, Perowne, Delitzsch, Hupfield, Moll. 4, *Thou layest*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 5, Hebrew, *Thou makest him blessings*; *a fount of blessing*, Kay. 6, *in Thy presence*, Kay. 7, *furnace of fire*, Kay, Perowne. 8, *of Thy presence*, Septuagint. 9, *They bent evil over thee, to cast it over thee*, Septuagint, Hitzig, Hengstenberg, Delitzsch. 10, *They devise mischief, they accomplish nothing*, Delitzsch, Kay. 11, *The strings of Thy bow*, Prayer Book Version; *bowstrings*, Kay.

**New Testament References.**—No quotations from this Psalm occur in the New Testament.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *The King*, the Targum has “King Messiah;” *strength—salvation*, *id* and *succour in battle*. 2, *heart’s desire, &c.*, both the unexpressed wish and the spoken petition. *Selah* (see Introduction, page 5). 3, *preventest him, &c.*, Thou bestowest blessings even before they are sought; *a crown*, some see in this merely a phrase importing kingly dignity; others, a historical reference to the crown of the king of the children of Ammon (2 Sam. xii. 30). Later tradition places this “crown” on the head of an image of Moloch, and states that a panic fell on David’s soldiers at the sight of the idol, until Ittai of Gath tore off the crown, in which was set a precious stone of magnetic power, and placed it upon the head of David (Rev. vi. 2). 4, *He asked, &c.*, “David besought God for the child,” but in vain (2 Sam. xii. 16); to himself it was said, “thou shalt not die.” The words may apply to preservation besought in battle. Mediæval Commentators see a reference to S. Matt. xxvi. 39, and to S. Jno. v. 26; *ever and ever*, inapplicable to David, and applied in the Targum to the Messiah.

(Rom. vi. 9-10, Rev. i. 18). 5, *Great, &c.*, his preservation and victory increased his glory (2 Tim. ii. 10). 6, *hast set, &c.*, hast made him to be both blessed and a blessing (Rom. ix. 5, 1 Cor. i. 30, Eph. i. 3). 7, *For the King, &c.*, the reason for the foregoing. 8, *Thine hand, &c.*, An address to the King commences here. 9, *fiery oven*, thou shalt consume them as a furnace or oven does its fuel: perhaps an allusion to the "brick-kiln" of 2 Sam. xii. 31. 13, *Be Thou, &c.*, A cry to Jehovah, beseeching Him to exalt His own power in granting victory to the king.

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## PSALM XXII.

(GOOD-FRIDAY, MATTINS.)

**The History.**—This Psalm is a cry for help, under bitter suffering. It is attributed in the Inscription to David, and has been supposed to refer to some incident of his persecution by Saul such as that recorded in 1 Sam. xxiii. 25-26. It has been asserted that it could not have been written by David, because it recounts sorrows which exceed anything which we know of in his experience. It may be said, in reply to this, that we know of no other sufferer in Old Testament History to whom its expressions would have been any more literally applicable. If inappropriate to David, they are, as far as we are aware, equally so to Jeremiah, or to any of the exiles in Babylon, and yet that prophet, or one of the latter, has been suggested as the writer. The Jewish Commentators, unable to understand how the

sufferings of one individual could produce such world-wide results, explained it of the national sorrows of Israel in exile. Its language, again, has been held to be anticipatory, that in it the writer pictures not what is, or has been, but what would be his fate were he to fall into the hands of his enemies. The Psalm appears to present one of those instances in which David, or some other of the Psalmists, moved by the Spirit which was in him, has overpassed in his language the limit of his own experience, and has "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ."

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm consists of Two Parts. The *First*, ver. 1-21, is the complaint and prayer of a sufferer, uttered under circumstances of the most humiliating yet undeserved degradation. This earlier portion is subdivided, verses 2-10, and bases its appeal upon God's love, the latter part, verses 11-21, on the pressing character of the peril. The *Second Division* of the Psalm, verses 22-31, to which ver. 21 gives the key-note, is a strain of triumphant praise, consisting of vows of Thanksgiving, verses 22-26, followed by predictions of the setting up, verses 27-31, of the Kingdom of God. The whole Psalm is a foreshadowing of Christ, of the circumstances of His Passion, of how He "suffered these things," and should "enter into His glory." Tradition affirms that Our Lord repeated this Psalm while hanging on the Cross. The Eastern Church, and the Ambrosian Use, both employ this Psalm on Good Friday. The Jews used it on the Festival of Purim.

**The Inscription.**—For the "chief Musician," see on Psalm vi. *Aijeleth-Shahar*, should rather be

*Ayeleth Has-shachar*, "The Hind of the Morning-dawn." Much discussion has arisen as to whether this heading, which occurs here only, is descriptive of the purport of the Psalm or is merely a musical direction. Some Jewish Commentators consider it to be the name of a musical instrument, and a few modern critics would render it as "the morning-flute," that is, according to their entirely conjectural explanation, the one played upon at the time of the morning sacrifice. The Chaldee Paraphrase has "the power of the continual Morning Sacrifice." Others suggest that it is the name of some well-known lyrical composition, the melody of which was to be used. The earlier Commentators are of opinion that it expresses, allegorically, the contents of the Psalm. While the wicked and the persecutors are described in the Psalm as dogs, lions, bulls, they see in the hind pursued by the hunters even from the morning dawn, a type of an innocent sufferer, a figure suited to the persecuted David, to the house of Judah in captivity, or to the suffering Messiah.

To the chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David.

1. My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me ?  
Far from helping me—the words of my roaring.<sup>1</sup>
2. O my God, I cry in the day-time, but Thou hearest not ;  
And in the night-season, and am not silent.
3. But Thou art Holy,  
That inhabitest the praises of Israel !<sup>2</sup>
4. In Thee our fathers trusted,  
They trusted, and Thou didst deliver them.
5. Unto Thee they cried, and were delivered,  
In Thee they trusted, and were not confounded.

6. But I—am a worm, and no man,  
A reproach of men, and despised of the people.
7. All they that see me laugh me to scorn,  
They shoot out the lip, they shake the head ;—
8. “ He rolled himself on the **LORD**!<sup>3</sup>—He would  
deliver him ;  
“ Let Him deliver him, if He delight in him.”
9. But Thou art He that took me out of the womb,  
Thou didst make me hope when upon my  
mother’s breasts.
10. Upon Thee was I cast ever since I was born ;  
From my mother’s womb Thou art my God.
11. Be not far from me ; for trouble is near,  
For there is not a helper.
12. Many bulls have compassed me,  
Strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.
13. They gaped upon me with their mouths,  
As a ravening and roaring lion.
14. I am poured out like water,  
And all my bones are out of joint ;  
My heart is like wax,  
It is melted in the midst of my bowels.
15. My strength is dried up like a potsherd,  
And my tongue cleaveth to my gums,  
And Thou shalt bring me into the dust of death.
16. For dogs are come about me ;  
The assembly of the wicked have inclosed me ;  
They pierced my hands and my feet.<sup>4</sup>
17. I may tell all my bones ;  
They look and stare upon me.
18. They part my garments among them,  
And cast lots upon my vesture.
19. But Thou O **LORD**—be not far from me ;  
O my Strength, haste Thee to help me.

20. Deliver my soul from the sword ;  
     . My only one<sup>6</sup> from the power<sup>6</sup> of the dog.

21. Save me from the lion's mouth :—  
     For from the horns of the unicorns<sup>7</sup> hast Thou  
         heard me.

22. I will declare Thy Name unto my brethren ;  
     In the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee.

23. “Ye that fear the LORD, praise Him ;  
     “ All ye the seed of Jacob, magnify Him ;  
     “ And fear Him, all ye seed of Israel.

24. “ For He hath not despised nor abhorred the  
         afflictions of the afflicted,  
     “ He hath not hid His face from him,  
     “ But, when he cried unto Him, He heard.”

25. Of<sup>8</sup> Thee shall be my praise in the great con-  
         gregation :—  
     My vows will I pay before them that fear Him.

26. The meek<sup>9</sup> shall eat and be satisfied ;  
     They shall praise the LORD that seek Him ;—  
     Your heart shall live for ever.<sup>10</sup>

27. All the ends of the world shall remember them-  
         selves and turn unto the LORD ;  
     And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship  
         before Thee.

28. For the kingdom is the LORD's,  
     And He is the Governor among the nations.

29. All such have eaten and worshipped, as be fat  
         upon earth ;  
     Before Him shall kneel all they that go down  
         into the dust ;  
     And no man can keep alive his own soul.<sup>11</sup>

30. A seed shall serve Him ;  
     It shall be accounted to the Lord<sup>12</sup> for a  
         generation.<sup>13</sup>

31. They shall come and shall declare His righteousness;

Unto a people that shall be born, that He hath done this.

**Critical References.**—1, *Far from my Salvation are the words of my roaring*, Kay, Septuagint, Vulgate; and *art far from helping me?* Such are the words of my roaring, Hupfield; *why art Thou far from helping me, and from, &c.?* Perowne. 2, *Art enthroned on*, Kay; *throned above*, Perowne, Delitzsch. 3, “*Roll it on the Lord*,” Kay, Delitzsch; “*Roll thyself, &c.*” Perowne. 4, *They pierced, lit. they dug, so, two Hebrew Manuscripts, Syriac and Arabic Versions, Septuagint, Vulgate; as a lion my hands and my feet*, Masoretic punctuation of Hebrew Manuscripts; *gnawing as a lion my hands and my feet*, Targum. 5, Perowne, *My solitary one*, Kay, Hupfield. 6, *lit. hand*. 7, *bisons*, Kay; *buffaloes*, Perowne. 8, *lit. From with Thee*. 9, *The afflicted*, Perowne. 10, *May your heart*, Kay; *let your heart*, Perowne. 11, *Yea, he who could not, &c.*, Kay; and *whosoever cannot, &c.*, Perowne. 12, *told of the Lord*, Kay; *concerning*, Perowne; *recounted of*, Wordsworth’s Commentary. 13, *To the next generation*, Kay, Perowne.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 1, *My God, &c.* S. Matt. xxvii. 46. 7, *All they, &c.*, S. Matt. xxvii. 39-43. 18, *They part, &c.*, S. Matt. xxvii. 35, S. Jno. xix. 24. 21, *lion’s mouth*, 2 Tim. iv. 17, 1 Pet. v. 8. 22, *I will declare, &c.*, S. Matt. xxviii. 10. S. Jno. xx. 17, Heb. ii. 12. 26, *shall eat*, S. Jno. vi. 50. 27, *worship before Thee*, Philip. ii. 10. 31, *shall declare, &c.*, Rom. iii. 25-26.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *My God, &c.*, the cry of astonishment, and yet, in the repeated “my,” of faith. *Why*, there is no cause in me for Thy doing so. The Prayer Book Version follows the Septuagint and Vulgate by inserting “look upon me,” which is not in the Hebrew. *Far from helping, &c.*, or, *Far from my salvation*, The Psalmist elsewhere (Pss. xxxv. 3, lxii. 2) calls God his “Salvation,” and some would consequently explain these words as, “the words of my roaring are far from my Salvation,”

that is, my cry does not come near before God. Others take "salvation" in a lower sense and interpret them as meaning, my crying brings me no help. Another exposition connects them with the foregoing question but makes the latter portion descriptive, "Why hast Thou forsaken me, and art so far from helping me? Such, are the words of my roaring." In this latter explanation some of the earliest and latest Commentators agree; *roaring*, used specially of the roar of the lion. 2, *O my God*, &c., these words may be taken either as the burden of the cry which the speaker utters day and night, or, as forming the address of his present appeal. *Thou hearest not*, this was the mistaken conclusion at which the sufferer had arrived. 3, *But Thou*, &c., notwithstanding this Thy seeming desertion of me. The ceaseless praises offered up by Thy covenanted people Israel testify to Thy continued holiness, and if that is unchangeable, so also must be Thy faithfulness. For "holy" the Septuagint reads "in the Sanctuary;" *inhabitest* (1 Sam. iv. 4). 4, *In Thee*, &c., the experience of the past shews that the cry for help has never been in vain. 6, *But I*, &c., my helpless and despised condition exceeds that of any who have gone before me, but I,—I am a worm, &c. The word used for "worm" is a peculiar one, and denotes the worm, or grub (resembling the cochineal insect), from which a scarlet dye was obtained. The old expositors saw in this (as they did in Josh. ii. 18) a mystical allusion to the "blood of His cross." *A reproach*, much of this language is scarcely applicable to David personally. 7, *They shoot out*, &c., an Eastern mode of expressing contempt (S. Matt. xxvii. 31-39, S. Luke xxiii. 11-35). 8, *He rolled*, &c., rather, "Let

him roll, &c." as though they had said, "It was his favourite saying,—let us see whether it will hold good." The Chief Priests with the Scribes and Elders mocked unwittingly with a phrase, the place and context of which they had possibly forgotten, in a fearful unconsciousness that they were by their words and actions turning prophecy into history. 9, *But Thou, &c.*, because they mock at my trust I reiterate it. I fall back upon Thy earliest dealings with me. I am now as helpless as I was in my infancy, but even there I was taught by Thee to trust to my mother's breast. "So long Thy power hath blessed me" that surely now Thou wilt not cast me off. 11, *Be not, &c.*, if trouble be near, be Thou yet nearer. *For there, &c.*, this was not David's case. Our Blessed Lord put aside all help, human or angelic (S. Matt. xxvi. 52-3). 12, *Strong bulls, &c.*, his enemies were more than ordinarily powerful ones, even as the "bulls of Bashan," fed on the rich pastures of Gilead, were famed for their strength above other cattle. 13, *As a ravening, &c.*, yet another similitude is taken from the animal world in order to express the fury of his adversaries. 14, *I am poured, &c.*, my state is one of unresisting helplessness, while my enemies regard me as destroyed beyond any possible hope of restoration. 15, *And my tongue, &c.* (S. Jno. xix. 28); *And Thou, &c.*, "Thou didst it," the power of my enemies is after all only permitted. 16, *For dogs, &c.*, these represent the lowest of the people, the rabble; *The assembly, &c.* (S. Matt. xxvi. 67); *They pierced, &c.*, this is the reading of but two MSS. only, although the ancient Versions unite in its favour. All the other MSS. now in existence have the Masoretic punctuation, according to which the word

is read as, "like a lion." If the Masoretic punctuation is disregarded the word becomes, as different vowels are supplied, either, "they pierced," or "piercing," or as before, "like a lion." In the latter case the sentence is without a verb, and one, such as "gnawing" in the Targum, has to be supplied. The lion is twice mentioned in this Psalm, but in each instance, not this word, but its ordinary name is employed. 17, *All my bones are*, stretched upon the Cross; *They look and stare*, first unconcernedly, then with gratified malice. 18, *They part my, &c.*, on the assumption that these, as the sufferer is dying, are without an owner (S. Matt. xxvii. 35). 19, *But Thou, &c.*, this recurs to the expression of verse 11. 20, *sword* (Zech. xiii. 7), used to denote the power of the Roman Magistrate (Rom. xiii. 4). 20, *Only one*, the one, and consequently the precious life which a man possesses. It is used for an only child, a son (Genesis xxii. 2), and for an only daughter (Judg. xi. 34); Prayer-Book Version, "my darling." Some understand it to mean "my solitary," that is, my forsaken one. 21, *unicorns*, a one-horned animal, such as is the rhinoceros, is possible; it is the anatomically impossible position of the horn, which renders the so-called "unicorn" fabulous. 22, *my brethren*, "as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same"—"made like unto the brethren" (S. Matt. xxviii. 10, S. John xx. 17, Rom. viii. 29, Heb. ii. 9-12). Lamentation is henceforward changed into exultation. The sufferer has been "heard," and the mystery, and result of suffering has been unfolded before him. 23, *Ye that fear, &c.*, these, verses 23, 24, are the words of his song of thanksgiving. 24,

*afflicted* (Is. liii. 4, 7). 25, *Of*, not "about Thee," but, "the power to praise comes from Thee." 26, *shall eat, &c.*, that is, of the Thank-offering of the rescued sufferer, of the feast upon the sacrifice which followed the discharge of his vows made in time of trouble. It is typical of the partaking of "the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood" of Christ. *be satisfied*, this food shall preserve the "body and soul unto everlasting life," and they who partake of it shall now be fulfilled with "grace and heavenly benediction," and shall be fully "satisfied" when they awake up after His likeness. *Your heart, &c.*, this is a salutation, and a welcome to the Eucharistic Feast. 27, *All the ends, &c.*, this language transcends anything connected with David, and points to the conversion of the heathen (Col. iii. 11). 29, *All such, &c.* In the Eucharistic Feast all differences of social rank are disregarded, and all who are partakers of a common mortality partake together of this pledge of the life immortal. The rich and noble, the "fat upon earth," share it with the man whose poverty scarcely allows him the means of sustenance by which he "can keep alive his own soul." The healthy and the strong receive these Holy Mysteries, kneeling beside him who is on the point of having this painful life ended. 30, *A seed, &c.*, successive generations shall hand down a knowledge of what the Lord hath done. The Church shall "continue a perpetual memory of that His precious death until His coming again." 31, *Unto a people, &c.*, born of water and of the Spirit. *He hath done this*, both the first and the last exclamations on the Cross are to be found in this Psalm.

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## PSALM XXIV.

*(ASCENSION-DAY, EVENSONG.)*

**The History.**—Jewish Expositors connect this Psalm with the admonition conveyed to David by Nathan respecting the building of the Temple (2 Sam. vii. 1-5, 1 Chron. xvii, 1-4). The removal of the Ark from the house of Obed-edom, where it had remained for three months, to the City of David, seems to be with greater probability the occasion of its composition (2 Sam. vi. 12). The previous attempt at its removal from Kirjath-jearim (1 Sam. vii. 1), where it had lain neglected for fifty years, had resulted in failure (2 Sam. vi. 10), and some find in the fourth verse of this Psalm an allusion to the act of Uzzah (2 Sam. vi. 6). The Psalm certainly has reference to some occasion when the Ark was carried into the Sanctuary.

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm, which some, without good grounds, have considered as made up of two originally distinct compositions, is preferably to be regarded as consisting of Two Parts. The *First*, verses 1-6, is preparatory to the entrance of the Ark into the City of David. The *Second*, verses 7-10, is concerned with the Entrance itself. It is manifestly appropriate for use upon Ascension-Day, but the Gregorian Use assigns it to Trinity Sunday. An interpretation, current in the Greek Church, regards it as typical of the entrance of Our Lord into Hades.

**The Inscription.**—The Psalm is attributed to David.

A Psalm of David.

1. The LORD's is the earth and the fulness thereof,  
The world and they that dwell therein ;
2. For He hath founded it upon the seas,  
And established it upon the floods.<sup>1</sup>
3. Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD,  
Or who shall stand in His holy place ?
4. He that hath clean hands and a pure heart,  
Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity ;  
Nor sworn deceitfully.
5. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD,  
And righteousness from the God of his salvation.
6. This is the generation of them that seek Him :—  
That seek Thy face !—O Jacob,<sup>2</sup> Selah.
7. Lift up your heads, O ye gates ;  
And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors ;  
And the King of Glory shall come in.
8. Who is this King of Glory ?  
  
The LORD strong and mighty,  
The LORD mighty in battle.
9. Lift up your heads, O ye gates,  
Even lift up, ye everlasting doors,  
And the King of Glory shall come in.
10. Who is this<sup>3</sup> King of Glory ?  
  
The LORD of Hosts ;  
He is the King of Glory. Selah.

**Critical References.**—1, *And upon streams doth He make it fast*, Perowne. 2, (*These are*) *Jacob*; i.e. *The true Israel*, Kay, Wordsworth's Commentary, Delitzsch, Hengstenberg; *O (God of) Jacob*, Perowne, Speaker's Commentary. 3, *Who is this then, that King, &c.?* Perowne; *Who is He, this King*, &c., Kay, Delitzsch.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 1, *The earth, &c.*, 1 Cor. x. 26. 4, *pure heart*, S. Matt. v. 8. 7, *King of Glory*, 1 Cor. ii. 8.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *The LORD'S, &c.*, an assertion that Jehovah, the Covenant God of Israel, the symbol of Whose Presence was about to be carried up to Zion the national sanctuary, was none other than the Almighty Creator. This verse is recited in the Greek Burial Office when the body is committed to the ground. 2, *He*, and *He* only. 3, *Who shall ascend, &c.?* an inquiry as to what manner of persons those must be who should appear before God; *ascend*, they would go on from strength to strength to Zion, and “thither ascend,” and finally “stand in His holy place,” and “with Him continually dwell;” *hill*, Zion had taken the place of Sinai as the hill of the LORD (Num. x. 3, Heb. xii. 22). 4, *hands*, that carry out into action the thoughts and intents of the heart. The outward conduct is a mark of inward purity; *vanity*, the fashion of this world, which passes away. 5, *the blessing*, if the preceding verse contains any allusion to Uzzah, this verse may refer to the blessing granted to Obed-edom (2 Sam. vi. 11); *from the LORD*, “from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed;” *righteousness* (1 Cor. iv. 7, Eph. v. 9). 6, *O Jacob*. This has been explained as being a description of the “generation,” “these that seek Thy face are collectively the true Israel of God” (Gal. vi. 16),

or by regarding it as an address, "That seek Thy face! O God of Jacob." Yet another exposition considers the address to be directed to Jacob, "That seek that face which thou didst see, O Jacob" (Gen. xxxii. 30, Isa. xlv. 19). 7, *Lift up, &c.*, the procession bearing the Ark of the LORD is now supposed to be approaching the City of David, "with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet." As it draws near to the gates, possibly of unknown antiquity, and from their massiveness seemingly likely to last yet for ages, the cry is raised, "Lift up your heads, &c." : they seemed to be all too low for that which was regarded as the personal entrance of the King of Glory. 7, *King of Glory*, the mystical application of this verse sees in it Christ entering after His sufferings into His Glory, victorious over the grave, strong and mighty in battle, but alone. 10, *The LORD, &c.* The reply to the second interrogation describes Him as the King and Conqueror, followed by His victorious hosts, His saints, who shall appear with Him in glory. This last question is put in a stronger form: "Who then is He—this King of Glory?"

## PSALM XXXII.

(ASH-WEDNESDAY, MATTINS.)

**The History.**—This Psalm is evidently the outpouring of David's heart at a time when he had just realised the blessedness of repentance and forgiveness. After a year had passed since the commission of his grievous sin, the prophet Nathan stood suddenly before him, while from his lips fell the

touching story of the poor man and his lamb, which roused David's indignation and caused him to become self-condemned. That the Psalm belongs to this period there can be but little doubt.

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm begins with a declaration of the blessedness of the pardoned sinner, verses 1-2. This is followed by a description of the misery caused by unconfessed and unrepented sin, verses 3-4. Then the immediate sequence of Forgiveness upon Confession is narrated, verse 5. The Psalmist then states the effect which God's dealings with himself should have upon others, verses 6-7. This leads to an exhortation addressed to such as are still impenitent, verses 8-9. Lastly, a contrast is drawn, in verses 10-11, between the condition of the wicked and that of the righteous.

The Jews were accustomed to recite this Psalm at the close of the Synagogue Service on the day of Atonement. The Sarum Use employed it daily during Lent. It is now selected as one of the Proper Psalms for Ash-Wednesday.

**The Inscription.**—A Psalm of David, *Maschil*. The word *Maschil*, which occurs here for the first time, is prefixed to thirteen Psalms. Its meaning, Understanding, or Intelligence, or Admonition, is supposed to indicate that the Psalm which follows is one giving instruction, verse 8. A second Inscription is added at Psalm xlv., *Maschil*, A Song of Loves. This is held to be an argument for the view that *Maschil*, which is frequently associated with musical terms, is merely a musical direction. One conjecture, based upon Ps. xlvii. 7, is that it is a warning that

considerable musical skill would be required for either the vocal or instrumental performance. The *Maschil* seem to have been of various kinds, and are distinguished by the name of their Composer, as of David, of Asaph, of Heman, and of Ethan.

A Psalm of David, *Maschil*.

1. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven,  
whose sin is covered.
2. Blessed is the man, unto whom the **LORD**  
imputeth<sup>1</sup> not iniquity,  
And in whose spirit there is no guile.
3. For while I kept silence my bones consumed  
away<sup>2</sup>  
Through my roaring all the day long.
4. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me,  
My moisture is turned into the drought of sum-  
mer. Selah.
5. I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine  
iniquity have I not hid;  
I said, "I will confess my transgressions unto the  
**LORD**;"  
And Thou—forgavest the iniquity of my sin.  
Selah.
6. For this shall<sup>3</sup> every one that is godly pray unto  
Thee  
In a time of finding.<sup>4</sup>  
Surely in the floods of great waters they shall  
not come nigh unto him.<sup>5</sup>
7. Thou art my hiding place; Thou shalt preserve  
me from trouble;  
Thou shalt compass me about with songs of  
deliverance. Selah.

8. "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way  
which thou shalt go ;  
"I will counsel thee, mine eye shall be upon thee."<sup>6</sup>

9. "Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which  
have no understanding,  
"Whose mouth with bit and bridle must be held  
in,  
"Lest they come near unto thee."<sup>7</sup>

10. Many sorrows<sup>8</sup> shall be to the wicked ;  
But he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall  
compass him about.<sup>9</sup>

11. Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, ye righteous,  
And shout for joy all ye upright in heart.

**Critical References.**—1, reckons not, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 2, Prayer Book Version, wasted, Kay, Hengstenberg. 3, For this let, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 4, of visitation, Kay. 5, shall not reach him, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 6, with mine eye upon thee, Kay ; I will watch over thee with mine eye, Perowne ; I will counsel thee (watching over thee) with mine eye, Hupfield ; keeping mine eye upon thee, Delitzsch. 7, whose gaiety, Kay ; whose adornment is with bit, &c., Wordsworth's Commentary ; whose trapping is, &c., Perowne ; ornaments, Hengstenberg ; so as not to come nigh thee, Kay ; or else they will not, Perowne, Delitzsch. 8, many are the lashes of the sinner, Septuagint, Vulgate. 9, with favour doth He compass him about, Delitzsch ; with mercy He encircles him, Kay.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 1, Blessed, &c., Rom. iv. 6, 7, 8.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, Blessed, &c., the blessedness spoken of in the First Psalm is also three-fold, but arises from innocence, the blessedness here springs from pardon ; whose transgression, &c., the three expressions employed occur in Ex. xxxiv. 7, the transgression, or lawlessness, is pardoned, the sin,

or defilement, is hidden, the *iniquity*, or unrighteousness, is not reckoned. 2, *no guile*, no self-deceit, nor any attempt to conceal, excuse, or palliate his sin. 3, *For while*, &c., during the year in which David's sin remained unconfessed, he sorrowed with the sorrow of the world only, he dwelt upon his chastisement, but did not repent of the sin which had brought it upon him, and so became increasingly alienated from God. 4, *For*, &c., he seems to have had some painful illness about this period, his "roaring" was the cry of pain and not of contrition (Hos. vii. 14). 5, *I acknowledge*, &c. (1 John i. 9). 6, *For this*, &c., the motive for the prayer of the godly has been the subject of various expositions, such as "guided by my example," "encouraged by my experience," "because it has been shewn that pardon will follow confession," "for the same forgiveness as that which I have received," "lest they too should fall." *In a time*, &c., of seeking the LORD while He may be found, while yet it is the day of grace. *Surely*, &c., lest it should be found more difficult, or even impossible if that season be let slip (Prov. i. 25-8). In the time of sudden temptation (Isa. lix. 19), or of unlooked for trial (Isa. xlvi. 2), in the hour of death (Ps. xc. 5), and in the day of judgement (S. Matt. vii. 23, xxiv. 39). The more usual interpretation, however, explains the passage as asserting the security of the godly, that these waterfloods should not come nigh him (Pss. xlvi. 2, 3, xc. 8), that even should the torrents suddenly overtake him, he would still have a hiding place which they could neither reach nor overflow (Col. iii. 3). 7, *songs of deliverance*, such as Ex. xv. 1-18, Judges v. 8, *I will instruct*, &c., the older expositors consider these to be the words of Jehovah, modern commentators

assign them to David, as carrying out the purpose of the Psalm as one of Admonition (S. Luke xxii. 32); *mine eye, &c.*, with watchful care (Ezra v. 5, Jer. xl. 4). 9, *Whose mouth, &c.*, or, "whose trappings," the ornamental head-gear has an object. *Lest, &c.*, the meaning according to some Commentators is, that unless these animals are broken in, and have their high spirit, or their refractory temper, subdued, with bit and bridle, they will not be under control. Or, in accordance with the Rabbinical interpretation, they require this restraint lest they should come nigh thee, with head or hoof, to injure thee. Man, the possessor of understanding, should render a willing, and not a constrained, obedience. 10, *sorrows*, used of the wounds inflicted by the blows of the Egyptian task-masters (Ex. iii. 7). 11, *Be glad, &c.*, the Penitential Psalm ends with an exhortation to Praise.

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## PSALM XXXVIII.

(ASH-WEDNESDAY, MATTINS.)

**The History.**—Some would connect this Psalm with an incident of David's earlier life, and see in it the expression of his trouble after the spoiling of Ziklag by the Amalekites (1 Sam. xxx. 6). Others discover in it allusions to the circumstances of Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam. xvii. 1-4), while others again refer it to nearly the close of David's history, when Adonijah was put forward by Joab and Abiathar as his successor on the throne (1 Kings i. 5-7). In the absence of any marked indications in the Psalm

itself, it has been suggested that some of its language alludes to that bodily disease under which Tradition affirms that David was suffering about the time of Nathan's visit (2 Sam. xii. 1), and that the Psalm was composed at that period. His physical as well as spiritual suffering would seem when he wrote it to have been great. His conscience was awakened, and he expresses his fear lest his fall should give his enemies occasion to magnify themselves against him.

**The Structure, &c.**—The whole Psalm is pervaded by a deep consciousness of sin. The Penitent bases his appeal to God on three grounds. The *First* is the greatness of his bodily suffering, verses 1-8, which is aggravated by his friends' desertion of him, and by the dangers which threaten him, verses 9-12. As the *Second*, he pleads his own patience under this trial, verses 13-16. *Lastly*, he brings forward his repentance, and his fear lest wicked men should exult over his sorrows, 17-22.

The Gregorian Use assigned this Psalm to Good-Friday. The Sarum Use directed its daily recital during Lent. It now forms one of the Ash-Wednesday Psalms.

**The Inscription.**—The expression, "To bring to remembrance," seems to indicate, either that the Psalmist desired to lay his condition before God, that He might remember him, or, that in all his troubles he himself was determined to remember the Name of the LORD his God.

A Psalm of David to bring to remembrance.

1. O LORD, in Thy wrath rebuke me not,  
Neither in Thy hot displeasure chasten me.

2. For Thine arrows stick fast<sup>1</sup> in me,  
And Thy hand presseth me sore,
3. There is no soundness in my flesh because of Thine  
anger,  
Neither health<sup>2</sup> in my bones because of my sin.
4. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head ;  
Like a heavy burden, they are too heavy for me.
5. My wounds stink, and are corrupt,<sup>3</sup>  
Because of my foolishness.
6. I am wryed,<sup>4</sup> I am bowed down greatly ;  
All the day long I go mourning.
7. For my loins are filled with a sore disease,<sup>5</sup>  
And there is no soundness in my flesh.
8. I am feeble<sup>6</sup> and sore broken ;  
I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my  
heart.
  
9. Lord, before Thee is all my desire,  
And my groaning is not hid from Thee.
10. My heart panteth,<sup>7</sup> my strength faileth me ;  
As for the light of mine eyes—it also is not with  
me.
11. My lovers and my friends stand aloof from<sup>8</sup> my  
stroke,
12. They also that seek after my life lay snares for  
me ;  
And they that seek my hurt speak mischievous  
things,<sup>9</sup>  
And imagine deceits<sup>10</sup> all the day long.
  
13. But I as a deaf man heard not,  
And was as a dumb man, that openeth not his  
mouth.

14. Thus, I became even as a man<sup>11</sup> that heareth not,  
And in whose mouth are no reproofs.<sup>12</sup>
15. For in Thee, O LORD, do I hope ;  
Thou wilt answer, O Lord my God.
16. For I said, "Lest they should rejoice over me :"—  
When my foot slippeth, they magnify themselves  
against me.
17. For I am ready to halt,<sup>13</sup>  
And my sorrow<sup>14</sup> is continually before me.
18. For I will declare mine iniquity ;  
I will be sorry for my sin.
19. But mine enemies are lively, they are strong,  
And many in number<sup>15</sup> are they that hate me  
wrongfully.
20. They also that render evil for good  
Are mine adversaries<sup>16</sup> because I follow the thing  
that is good.
21. Forsake me not O LORD ;  
O my God, be not far from me.
22. Make haste to help me,  
O Lord, my Salvation.

**Critical References.**—1, *have sunk deep*, Kay. 2, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 3, *are festered*, Kay, Delitzsch. 4, *bowed down*, Kay; *bent*, Perowne, Delitzsch. 5, *are full of burning*, Kay. 6, *I have become cold as a corpse*, Perowne. 7, *throbs quick*, Kay; *pulseth quickly*, Perowne. 8, *stand over against*, Perowne. 9, *utter malignity*, Kay. 10, *meditated guileful deeds*, Kay. 11, Prayer Book Version, Kay, Perowne. 12, *replies*, Perowne. 13, *reduced to go halting*, Kay. 14, *wound sore*, Kay; *smart*, Perowne. 15, Prayer Book Version, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 16, *Are bitter against me*, Kay; *They withstand me*, Perowne.

**New Testament References.**—The Psalm is not quoted in the New Testament.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *rebuke me not, &c.*, let my chastisement be disciplinary, and administered in love and not in displeasure. 2, *arrows*, Thy judgments (Deut. xxxii. 23, Job vi. 4, Ezek. v. 16); *presseth*, the same word as that rendered “stick fast,” both Thine arrows and Thine hand fall upon me. 3, *soundness*, applied to the whole people (Isa. i. 6). Possibly a reference to the sickness which, according to Tradition, fell on David after his sin. 4, *have gone over mine head*, have closed over me like deep waters. 5, *foolishness*, the true aspect of sin (1 Sam. xiii. 13, 2 Sam. xxiv. 10). 6, *wryed*, bent awry. *I go mourning*, lit. squalid, sad coloured garments and neglect of the person, were signs of mourning among the Jews (2 Sam. xiv. 2. xix. 24). 8, *roared* (Heb. v. 7). 9, *Lord, &c.*, David calls upon Him to whom all hearts are open, to witness how great his sufferings are. His first ray of consolation springs from the laying of his sorrow before God. 11, *My lovers, &c.*, they who once were such consider me now to be “stricken, smitten of God and afflicted” (Isa. liii. 4, S. Matt. xxvi. 56, S. Luke xxiii. 49). 12, *They also, &c.*, possibly a reference to the counsel of Ahithophel (2 Sam. xvii. 2). 13, *B. t I, &c.*, though David’s enemies made false charges against him, still, his own consciousness of guilt compelled him to be silent. He also, Who knew no sin, was silent when false witness was brought against him (Isa. liii. 7, S. Matt. xxvi. 62, S. Mark xv. 4, S. Jno. xix. 9). 14, *reproofs*, a judicial term, no reply. 15, *For in Thee, &c.*, David refrained from answering himself, because he trusted to Jehovah’s vindication of him (1 Pet. ii. 23). In this and the following verses David gives four reasons for his keeping silence.

Because God would answer for him, because opening his mouth would give his enemies the opportunity of making a rejoinder (2 Sam. xii. 14), because his sin admitted neither of extenuation nor denial, because confession to God was his only relief. 18, *for my sin*, for that, and not for its punishment. 22, *O Lord*, however much he may despair of himself, he looks in confident faith to the Lord as his Salvation.

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## PSALM XL.

(*GOOD-FRIDAY, MATTINS.*)

**The History.**—The language of this Psalm, which possesses a general resemblance to Psalm lxix, does not refer with sufficient precision to any one circumstance of David's life to enable us to fix unhesitatingly on the period or occasion of its composition. It appears to have been written at a time of comparative security, which called forth earnest thanksgiving, though, nevertheless, a possibility of future peril was still in existence. It has consequently been assigned to the period of the Wandering, when David was frequently in danger owing to the enmity of Saul. Another suggestion is, that it belongs to the time, at the close of David's life and reign, when in an interval of restored strength the aged monarch "stood up upon his feet" and gave his son Solomon a charge (1 Chron. xxviii. 9), and "blessed the Lord before all the congregation" (1 Chron. xxix. 10). To defer it to the time of Josiah seems to be an uncalled for, and an unsupported, conjecture.

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm consists of Two Portions, the *First*, verses 1-10, consisting of ten, the *Second*, 11-17, of seven verses.

In the *First* Portion, the Psalmist, now rescued from danger, offers up a thanksgiving for his deliverance from past troubles. He had fallen as it were into a pit, verses 2-3, out of which God had brought him, as He would also everyone who trusted in Him, verses 4-5. His affliction had taught him the lesson that the sacrifice of an obedient will was more acceptable than burnt-offering or sin-offering, verses 6-8. Having been enabled to perceive this great truth, he had proceeded to proclaim the loving-kindness of the *LORD* to the great congregation, verses 9-10.

In the *Second* Part, verses 11-17, the Psalmist, who still appears to be exposed to some dangers, confesses that he is bowed down by his sins, verse 12, and that his enemies still seek after his life, verses 13-15. On this account he offers fervent prayers, verses 16-17, and closes by casting all his care upon God in the assurance that the *Lord* careth for him.

The Gregorian, Ambrosian, and Monastic Uses concur in appointing this Psalm for Good Friday, to which verses 6-8 render it appropriate.

**The Inscription.**—This classes the Psalm as amongst those composed by David.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

1. Patiently I waited<sup>1</sup> for the *LORD*,  
And He inclined unto me and heard my cry.
2. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit,<sup>2</sup>  
out of the miry clay,  
And set my feet upon a Rock; and established  
my goings.

3. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even  
    praise unto our God :—  
    Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the  
    LORD.
4. Blessed is that man, that maketh the LORD his  
    trust,  
    And respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn  
    aside to lies<sup>3</sup>
5. Many are Thy wonderful works which Thou O  
    LORD my God hast done,  
    And Thy thoughts to usward ;  
    They cannot be reckoned up in order unto Thee !  
    Would I declare and speak of them ;—they are  
    more than can be numbered.
6. Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire ;  
    Mine ears hast Thou digged.<sup>4</sup>  
    Burnt-offering and sin-offering Thou hast not  
    required.
7. Then said I, Lo, I come ;<sup>5</sup>  
    In the volume of the book<sup>6</sup> it is written of me ;
8. To do Thy will, O my God, I delight ;  
    Yea, Thy law is within my heart.
9. I have preached righteousness in the great  
    congregation,  
    Lo, I have not refrained my lips ; Thou, O LORD,  
    knowest.
10. I have not hid Thy righteousness within my heart,  
    I have declared Thy faithfulness and Thy  
    salvation ;  
    I have not concealed Thy loving-mercy and Thy  
    truth from the great congregation.
11. Thou, O LORD—withhold not Thy mercy from me ;  
    Let Thy loving-kindness and Thy truth continu-  
    ally preserve me.

12. For evils innumerable have compassed me about,  
Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me ; so that  
I am not able to look up;<sup>7</sup>  
They are more than the hairs of my head ;  
therefore my heart forsaketh me.

13. Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me ;  
O Lord, make haste to help me.

14. Let them be ashamed and confounded<sup>8</sup> together  
that seek after my soul to destroy it ;  
Let them be driven backward and put to shame  
that wish me evil.

15. Let them be desolate for a reward<sup>9</sup> of their shame,  
that say unto me : Aha, Aha !

16. Let all those that seek Thee be joyful and glad  
in Thee ;  
Let such as love Thy salvation continually say  
“The LORD be magnified !”

17. But I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh  
upon me;<sup>10</sup>  
My help and my deliverer art Thou ; O my God,  
make no tarrying.

**Critical References.**—1, Hebrew, *Waiting I waited.* 2, *pit of noise*, Ver. 1611, Marg., *gurgling pit*, Kay ; *of destruction*, Perowne, Delitzsch. 3, *such as go aside falsely*, Perowne ; *turn aside to falsehood*, Kay ; *to lying apostates*, Hupfield. 4. *ears hast Thou made me*, Vulgate, Syriac, Chaldee ; *hast thou digged for me*, Kay ; *a body hast Thou prepared me*, Septuagint, Heb. x. 5, Italic Version. 5, *Behold I am come*, Kay. 6, *lit. roll ; with the roll of the book which is written of me*, Delitzsch. 7, *to see over them*, Hupfield, Hitzig. 8, *abashed*, Kay. 9, *by reason of*, Kay. 10, Septuagint ; *is careful for me*, Vulgate.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 6-8, *sacrifice, &c.*, Heb. x. 5-7.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *Patiently I waited*, his patience is the point upon which the Psalmist

desires to lay stress. 2, *horrible pit*, some think a pitfall such as was used to entrap wild animals was intended, others, that an empty cistern, used as a dungeon, was in the Psalmist's thoughts, which would be in accordance with a "pit of noise" (that is of the rushing water). The remains of such cisterns shew them to have been of great size and depth (Gen. xxxvii. 22-4, Jer. xxxviii. 6-13); *my goings*, has made me to plant my steps securely. 3, *new song*, such as the greatness of the deliverance demanded; *Many*, this is the Psalmist's meditation on the circumstance; *see it*, the pit, from which I was rescued. 4, *the proud*, a peculiar word, the self-confident, and boastful; *such as turn*, possibly a reference to Ahithophel. 5, *cannot be reckoned*, so that there is no possibility of rendering Thee an equivalent. 6, *Sacrifice, &c.*, the legal offerings would be an altogether inadequate repayment. Some see an allusion to 2 Sam. xv. 12, or to Adonijah's sacrifice (1 Kings i. 19). The sacrifices are here classified, first by their materials, slain animals, or unbloody offerings, next, by their object, the obtaining of God's blessing, or the turning away of his wrath. Sacrifice is of secondary importance to "obeying the voice of the Lord" (1 Sam. xv. 22); *Mine ears, &c.*, lit. "ears hast Thou digged me," the word is used of digging a well (Gen. xxvi. 25, Num. xxi. 18). Some Expositors see a reference to the bored ear of the servant who wished to remain permanently in his master's service (Ex. xxi. 5-6, Deut. xv. 16-17). The word used for "boring" the servant's ear, is, however, a different one from that here employed, and the Psalmist says "mine ears," while the servant had only one ear fastened to the door post.

The Rabbinical writers do not recognise any such allusion, and the majority of Commentators are in favour of the explanation, "Thou hast fashioned me the organs of hearing" (Prov. xx. 12), "by which I may receive Thy revelations and instructions and so may be enabled to obey them." The Septuagint has a reading, or paraphrase, for which it is not easy to account, "a body hast Thou prepared me;" but the Vulgate rendering is "ears hast Thou made me." The familiar Septuagint is quoted in Heb. x. 5, of which it has been observed that the "body" includes the "ears," while they infer the "body." 7, *Then said I, &c.*, the Psalmist, having now the "hearing ear," the Roll of the Book in his hand, and the Law in his heart, declares his purpose of rendering prompt obedience. *In the volume of the book*, rather, "in the Roll of the Book" (Jer. xxxvi. 2). The ancient book consisted of a strip of paper or parchment, having its end, or if long each end, rolled round a stick or cylinder. This stick had at the top an ornamental head or knob. The Septuagint uses here the word for this knob as an equivalent for the whole roll. Our word "volume" conveys a reminiscence of the act of rolling or unrolling a book. To open a book was really to unroll it (2 Kings xix. 14, S. Luke iv. 17); to seal it was to affix a seal to a thread tied round the roll. The roll was occasionally written on both sides (Ezek. ii. 9, 10; Rev. v. 1). The "book" which David had in his hands was the Pentateuch, of which, or at least of Deuteronomy, the king was to possess a copy (Deut. xvii. 18-20). *It is written of me*, not prophetically, but unto me; my duties as a king are prescribed in it. 8, *To do Thy will, &c.*, the whole of Scripture is a testimony to Christ. These

words surpass any application of them to David personally; *within my heart* (Prov. iii. 3, vii. 3; Jer. xxxi, 33, Heb. x. 16); *I have preached, &c.*, the historical circumstance may have been that recorded in 1 Chron. xxix. 1-20 (S. John vii. 28, xviii. 20); *Thou, O LORD*, an assertion, and a proof, that he was not using the language of self-deception (Rom. i. 9). 11, *Thou, O LORD*, with this petition the second part of the Psalm commences. The Psalmist had not refrained from celebrating the past mercies of God, and makes this the plea why God should not refrain from shewing him His loving-kindness in his present circumstances. 12, *Mine iniquities*, some consider this language as conclusive against any Messianic application of this Psalm, others regard it as having reference to the iniquity laid upon the suffering Messiah (Isa. liii. 6, 2 Cor. v. 21, Gal. iii. 13, 1 Pet. ii. 24), and as being the language of a Representative, who speaks in the name of others; *to look up*, or, "to see over them," they were like a great host, extending beyond the limits of his vision. 13, *Be pleased, &c.*, Prayer characterises this latter portion of the Psalm (which reappears as Psalm lxx.), as Praise had the former. The Psalmist asks for help for himself, and confusion for his enemies, and again for their desolation and for the gladdening of the righteous. 15, *Aha*, this expression of mockery is thrice found in the Psalms, in this place, and in Psalms xxxv. 21 and lxx. 3 (S. Matt. xxvii. 29-44). 17, *But I am poor, &c.* (S. Luke ix. 58, 2 Cor. viii. 9); *thinketh upon me*, with a providential care (S. Matt. vi. 32); *my help, &c.*, because I have no help but in Thee, make no tarrying.

## PSALM XLV.

*(CHRISTMAS-DAY, MATTINS.)*

**The History.**—This Psalm may be reasonably considered to rest upon some historical basis, notwithstanding the opinion of Jewish Commentators that it is simply ideally Messianic. Commentators have differed as to what that basis was. The most probable supposition on the whole is that it refers to the marriage of Solomon with the daughter of Pharaoh (1 Kings iii. 1, 2 Chron. viii. 11). The objection that Solomon was a man of peace, while the kingly hero of this Psalm is described as a conqueror, may be met by the fact that Solomon did extend his dominions by the subjugation of Zobah (2 Chron. viii. 3), while the address “Ride prosperously,” verse 4, is not inconsistent, to say the least, with Solomon’s large introduction from Egypt of chariots and horses (1 Kings x. 26-29).

The rendering which would make the bride herself to be a “daughter of Tyre,” verse 12, has led to the further conjecture that the marriage of Ahab and Jezebel is the theme (1 Kings xvi. 31). But apart from the consideration that Ahab was not of the line of David, the marriage of Solomon so sufficiently satisfies all requirements as to render needless a theory in itself so offensive. The marriages of Jehoram and Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab, and grand-daughter of Omri (2 Kings viii. 18, 26; 2 Chron. xxi. 6, xxii. 2), or of Hezekiah and Hephzibah (2 Kings xx. 21, xxii. 1), present no historical coincidences which can entitle either of them to be claimed as the occasion of this Psalm.

**The Structure, &c.**—This Psalm consists of Two main Portions, with subsidiary divisions, followed by a brief Conclusion. The *First* Portion, verses 1-9, dwells upon the beauty, eloquence, majesty, righteousness, and splendour of the King. The *Second*, verses 10-15, treats of the Bride and her companions, and of the bridal procession. A short Address, verses 16-17, closes the Psalm.

Both the Gregorian and Ambrosian Uses appropriate this Psalm to Christmas-Day. Composed as a bridal ode or hymn it fitly typifies the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and His Church, effected by His holy Incarnation.

**The Inscription.**—For, “To the chief Musician,” see on Ps. VI. “Upon *Shoshannim*,” the literal rendering of this word would be “upon lilies.” It has been conjectured that the word “lilies” indicates the hollow shape of cymbals, or that the six petals of the flower represent a six-stringed lute, or that it is the well-known name of a particular melody. With greater improbability it has been suggested that it is an allusion to the bride and her companions. The Septuagint apparently reads another word in the Hebrew, and renders it “to those who shall be changed.” “The sons of Korah,” were a Levitical family (Num. xxvi. 58): Those of the Kohathites who were descendants of Korah, and to whom the Psalms which bear this Inscription have been attributed. Such Psalms are all of a joyous and lyric character. David nevertheless may have been the writer of this Psalm, and have specially entrusted its execution to this particular band of Temple Musicians. If “*Maschil*” (see Ps. xxxii.) is to be

explained as meaning "requiring skill," this division of the Temple Choir may have been the most fitted to furnish the musical setting or accompaniment, or have possessed the most appropriate instruments. A Song of Loves. One of which the subject is love.

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, Maschil, A Song of loves.

1. My heart boileth up<sup>1</sup> with a good matter;  
I speak of the things which I have made unto  
the King;<sup>2</sup>  
My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.
2. Fairer art Thou than the children of men,  
Grace is poured into Thy lips :  
Therefore God hath blessed Thee for ever.
3. Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Thou most  
Mighty—  
With<sup>3</sup> Thy glory and Thy majesty ;
4. And in Thy majesty ride prosperously,<sup>4</sup>  
Because<sup>5</sup> of truth of meekness and righteousness ;  
And Thy right hand shall teach Thee terrible  
things.
5. Thine arrows are sharp ; the people fall under  
Thee ;  
In the heart of the King's enemies!<sup>6</sup>
6. Thy throne, O God,<sup>7</sup> is for ever and ever ;  
A right sceptre is the sceptre of Thy kingdom.
7. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity ;  
Therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee  
With the oil of gladness above Thy fellows.

8. Of myrrh and aloes and cassia [smell] all Thy garments ;  
Out of the ivory palaces, whereby<sup>8</sup> they have made Thee glad.
9. Kings' daughters were among Thy honourable women ;  
Upon Thy right hand did stand the Queen<sup>9</sup> in gold of Ophir.
10. "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear ;  
"Forget also thine own people and thy father's house :
11. "So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty ;  
"For He is Thy Lord ; and worship<sup>10</sup> thou Him.
12. "And the daughter of Tyre,—with a gift shall entreat thy favour,<sup>11</sup>  
"Even the rich among the people."
13. All glorious is the King's daughter within ;  
Of wrought gold<sup>12</sup> is her clothing.
14. In raiment of needlework<sup>13</sup> shall she be brought unto the King ;  
The virgins that follow her, her companions, shall be brought unto Thee.
15. They shall be brought with gladness and exultation,  
They shall enter into the King's palace.
16. Instead of Thy fathers shall be Thy children,  
Whom Thou mayest make princes in all the earth.
17. I will make Thy name to be remembered in all generations,  
Therefore shall the people praise Thee for ever and ever.

**Critical References.**—1, *is teeming*, Kay ; *is overflowing*, Perowne, Delitzsch ; *gushes up*, Speaker's Commentary. 2, *I am speaking, my work is for a King*, Perowne, Wordsworth's Commentary ; *I speak my song to the King*, Hupfield ; *my works*, Septuagint, Vulgate ; *my works are for the King*, Hengstenberg ; *I utter what I have framed concerning the King*, Kay. 3, omit with, Septuagint, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch, Hupfield. 4, *make Thy way—ride on*, Hebrew. 5, *in behalf of*, Kay, Perowne. 6, *in the midst among the King's enemies*, Prayer-Book Version, Kay. 7, all Ancient Versions. 8, *out of which*, Septuagint, Vulgate ; *thence*, Kay, Wordsworth's Commentary ; *stringed instruments*, Delitzsch ; *music*, Perowne ; *strains of harps*, Speaker's Commentary ; *of Armenia*, Chaldee Targum. 9, *Queen-Consort*, Kay, Perowne. 10, *bow thyself before him*, Perowne ; *do homage to him*, Delitzsch. 11, *lit. soothe thy countenance, entreat thy face*, Septuagint, Vulgate. 12, *ouches of gold*, Kay ; *thread of gold*, Perowne ; *gold woven texture*, Delitzsch. 13, Kay, Delitzsch, Hengstenberg ; *on carpets of tapestry*, Maurer.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 2, *grace is poured, &c.*, S. Luke iv. 22. 3, *sword, &c.*, Rev. xix. 15. 6, *Thy throne, Heb. i. 8, 9.* 13, *all glorious*, Eph. v. 27. 16, *princes, Rev. i. 6.*

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *I speak, &c.*, especial stress is laid upon his speaking, and upon the person to whom it had reference, the “King.” 2, *Fairer, &c.*, this word is used in this place only. The Psalmist addresses the King as if he were present. *Therefore, &c.*, the King is not “blessed” because he is endowed with superhuman beauty and gracious speech, but the Psalmist is convinced that these are the outward indications of His being fulfilled with God's “grace and heavenly benediction.” 3, *Gird, &c.*, the King is now addressed as a warrior hero ; *Thy glory, &c.*, that is thy sword which is the token of Thy glory and majesty (1 Chron. xxix, 25). 4, *ride, &c.*, either in Thy chariot, or on a war-horse. *Because of, &c.*, for the sake of, in order to maintain and execute truth, meekness, and righteousness. *Thy right hand*, per-

sonified as a teacher directing the exercise of indwelling power. 5, *Thine arrows, &c.*, a brief and vivid description of the battle. *In the heart, &c.*, either, *Thine arrows fix themselves in the hearts of Thine enemies* (Acts ii. 37), or, *fly into the midst of the host of Thine enemies* (Ps. cx. 2). 6, *Thy throne, &c.*, the Psalmist, carried beyond himself by Divine inspiration, employs language which asserts the Deity of Messiah, but which is inapplicable to any merely human king. Attempts have been made to lower the force of these words into meaning, *Thy Divine, or Thy God-like throne*, but the Vocative is the most grammatical rendering, and is the one adopted by the Ancient Versions (which carry it on into verse 7, "Therefore O God, Thy God, &c."). Moses had been "a god to Pharaoh" (Ex. vii. 1), that is, had seemed to him to exercise a Divine power as God's representative, but here a direct address is made to One whose throne is to endure for ever and ever (2 Sam. vii. 16, Ps. lxxxix. 4, 36, 37). 7, *Thy God*, Christian Expositors point out, that although the superhuman King is addressed as God, that still a distinction is preserved (S. John xx. 17), and see a prophecy of the "taking of the Manhood into God" in the assertion that He is anointed with the oil of gladness above His "fellows." The primary reference to Solomon would coincide with 1 Kings iii. 13, 2 Chron. i. 12. *oil of gladness*, Christ, as the Only-Begotten Son of God, had the Spirit given to Him without measure (S. John iii. 34). 8, *myrrh, &c.*, so perfumed are Thy garments that they would seem themselves to be made of spices (Cant. iii. 6). The Messiah, endowed with beauty, eloquence, might, and kingly authority, now appears as the bridegroom (S. Matt. xxii. 2);

*ivory palaces*, some understand by this the cabinets in which the perfumes had been stored, more probably magnificent palaces having their walls richly inlaid with ivory are intended (1 Kings x. 22, xxii. 39, Amos iii. 15); *whereby*, the Targum renders this word as "Armenian," making it refer to the palaces of Armenian ivory. Another rendering of it is, "strains of harps," or "stringed instruments," "have made thee glad," as though the bridegroom rejoiced at hearing the music of the marriage procession issuing from the ivory palaces (Jer. vii. 34, xvi. 9, S. Matt, xi. 17). 9, *Kings' daughters*, this feature of the court of an Oriental monarch readily lends itself to a mystical interpretation; *right hand* (1 Kings ii. 19); *the Queen*, a word signifying the Queen Consort. *Ophir* (Job xxviii. 16), the locality of Ophir has been a matter much discussed. Arabia, India, and Africa have each had their advocates. The arguments in favour of each turn chiefly upon the character of Solomon's imports (1 Kings x. 11), and of the countries which could best supply them, but the question cannot be regarded as decided. 10, "Hearken, O daughter," &c., the Psalmist made this earnest address, not to his own, but to "the King's daughter," the bride was a princess; *Forget also, &c.*, Israel was to be merged into the Catholic Church (Col. iii. 11). 11, *thy Lord* (1 Cor. viii. 6, Eph. iv. 5); *worship* (1 Kings i. 16). 12, *And the daughter, &c.*, some think that the bride was a Tyrian princess, and would render thus, "O daughter of Tyre! even the rich, &c.," but the city or people of Tyre may well be personified under this figure, as typical of the Gentiles coming into the Church (Isa. lx. 3). 13, *within*, in the inner chambers of her father's palace, whence she will be

brought to the bridegroom ; *wrought gold*, used only of the golden ornaments of the High Priest's ephod, and of the setting of the precious stones in his breast-plate. 16, *Instead of*, &c., this is generally understood to be an address in conclusion to the bridegroom, Messiah, though some think that the address to the bride is still continued (Rom. ix. 5) ; *princes*, spiritual rulers or princes. The prophecy oversteps any possible fulfilment by Solomon, or by any King of Judah ; *in all the earth* (S. Matt. xxviii. 19), the Church is still enlarging her boundaries in lands of which the Apostles never heard. 17, *Therefore*, &c., the perpetual memory of His Name shall be the source of unending praise.

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## PSALM XLVII.

(ASCENSION-DAY, MATTINS.)

**The History.**—This song of National Thanksgiving is attributed to one or other of two occasions of National Deliverance. One supposition refers it to the reign of Jehoshaphat and the invasion of the Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, recorded in 2 Chron. xx. The confederate hosts had marched by the way of En-gedi, and had encamped there, when Jehoshaphat was bidden by Jahaziel to go forth and find them, but only to stand still and see the salvation of the LORD. Either panic or jealousy led Ammon and Moab to combine and fall upon Edom, and then finally, to attack and destroy each other.

Jehoshaphat and his people spent three days in collecting the spoil. On the fourth they assembled in the valley of Berachah, which lay to the south of Jerusalem, between Bethlehem and Hebron, and received its name, the Valley of Blessing, from this occurrence. "Then they returned—and Jehoshaphat in the fore-front of them—and came to Jerusalem with psalteries and harps and trumpets into the house of the LORD."

The other possible occasion was when Sennacherib had moved the Assyrian army from Lachish to Libnah, in the South-Western part of Palestine (2 Kings xix. 8), and was intending to attack Jerusalem. In one night the miraculous destruction of the Assyrians, and consequently the deliverance of the city, was complete. It has been conjectured that this Psalm (together with the preceding and following one) formed a portion of the triumphant outburst of the nation's praise. The older Expositors thought that the Psalm had reference to the bringing of the Ark to Zion by David (2 Sam. vi. 12), but the general tenor of its language points with far greater probability to one of the occasions just mentioned.

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm consists of Two Stanzas. The *First*, verses 1-4, is an Exhortation to the people to praise Jehovah. The *Second*, verses 5-9, anticipate, in addition to the strain of triumph, the time when the nations shall have become one with the people of the God of Abraham. The Gregorian Use appoints the Psalm for Ascension-Day.

**The Inscription.**—"Chief Musician," see on Ps. VI. Sons of Korah, see on Ps. XLV.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah.

1. O all ye people, clap your hands,  
Shout unto God, with the voice of triumph.
2. For the **LORD** is Most High, He is terrible,  
A Great King over all the earth.
3. He shall subdue<sup>1</sup> the people under us,  
And the nations under our feet.
4. He shall choose<sup>2</sup> for us our inheritance,  
The excellency of Jacob, whom He loved. Selah.
5. God is gone up with a shout,  
The **LORD** with the sound of the trumpet.
6. Sing praises to God, sing praises ;  
Sing praises unto our King, sing praises.
7. For God is the King of all the earth ;  
Sing ye praises with understanding.<sup>3</sup>
8. God reigneth over the heathen ;  
God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness.
9. The princes of the people are gathered together,  
The people<sup>4</sup> of the God of Abraham ;  
For the shields of the earth belong unto God ;  
Greatly is He exalted.

**Critical References.**—1, *subdued*, Septuagint, Kay, Delitzsch ; *subdueth*, Perowne ; *may He subdue*, Hupfield. 2, *choose*, Kay, Delitzsch ; *chooseth*, Perowne. 3, *with a Psalm of Instruction*, Speaker's Commentary ; *intelligently*, Kay ; *with skilful strain*, Perowne, Hupfield. 4, *have assembled as the people*, Kay ; *to be a people*, Perowne.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 8, *God reigneth*, Rev. xi. 15-17.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *O all ye people, &c.*, a universal summons ; *clap your hands*, a gesture of joy and exultation (Nahum iii. 19). 2, *For the **LORD***,

&c., all people are called upon to unite in praise because Jehovah is not the God of Israel only, but "a great King over all the earth." 4, *He shall choose, &c.* (Josh. xiv. 1-2, S. Jno. xiv. 2); *The excellency, &c.*, "the pleasant land" (Dan. viii. 9), which, as being the gift of God, was the pride of Jacob; *whom He loved*, the land was chosen for the people because they themselves had been chosen (Deut. iv. 37, vii. 8, xxiii. 5, Ps. xxxiii. 12, S. Jno. xvi. 27). 5, *God is gone up, &c.*, He had, as it were, come forth on behalf of His people, when He had accomplished their deliverance He went up (Gen. xvii. 22, xxxv. 13, S. Jno. xvi. 28, Acts i. 11, Eph. iv. 9-10). 7, *For God is the, &c.*, this was the reason why they were to sing praises (Zech. xiv. 9, Rev. xi. 15-17). 8, *God reigneth, &c.*, the Psalmist sees in prophetic vision this reign begun; *sitteth*, in an eternal session (Dan. vii. 9). 9, *The princes, &c.*, the princes of the world and their peoples are gathered into the Church of Christ, and are become one with the people of the God of Abraham (Gen. xvii. 5, xxii. 18); *for the shields, &c.*, the Rulers (Hos. v. 18, margin), who should be the protectors of their people.

## PSALM XLVIII.

(WHIT SUNDAY, MATTINS.)

**The History.**—This Psalm is probably due to one or other of the occasions to which reference has been made in the history of the foregoing Psalm (xlvii.) It seems to have been intended for Temple use (ver. 9).

**The Structure, &c.**—Of the Three Stanzas of which the Psalm is composed, the *First*, vers. 1-3, is an Ascription of Praise, followed by a description of the beauty of Zion. The *Second*, vers. 4-8, vividly depicts the assembling and then the sudden dispersion of her enemies. The *Third*, vers. 9-14, is a strain of Thanksgiving. The Rabbis considered the Psalm to be Messianic, as having reference to the destruction of Messiah's enemies before the consummation of His triumph. It is selected in the Gregorian Use for Whit-Sunday, possibly as typical of that "power from on high" which the Apostles were to tarry in Jerusalem until they had received, and which was to fit them, not only to stand in the Temple and speak to the people, but for going forth to preach the Gospel unto the ends of the earth.

**The Inscription.**—“A Song,” a composition possessing the character of a Thanksgiving, either for personal or national mercies. “Sons of Korah,” see on Ps. XLV.

A Song and Psalm for the sons of Korah.

1. Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised,  
In the city of our God, the mountain of His  
holiness.
2. Beautiful for situation,<sup>1</sup> the joy of the whole  
earth,  
Is mount Zion, on the sides of the north,<sup>2</sup>  
The city of the great King.
3. God in her palaces  
Is known for a refuge.<sup>3</sup>

4. For lo ! the Kings were assembled,  
They passed by together.
5. They saw it ; so they marvelled,<sup>4</sup>  
They were troubled, and hasted away,<sup>5</sup>
6. Fear took hold upon them there,  
Pain as of a woman in travail.
7. With an East wind  
Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish.
8. As we have heard, so have we seen,  
In the city of the LORD of Hosts, in the city of  
our God ;  
God will establish it for ever. Selah.
9. We have thought of Thy lovingkindness, O God,  
In the midst of Thy Temple.
10. According to Thy Name, O God, so is Thy praise  
unto the ends of the earth ;  
Thy right hand is full of righteousness.
11. Let mount Zion rejoice ; let the daughters of  
Judah be glad,  
Because of Thy judgments.
12. Walk about Zion and go round about her,  
Tell the towers thereof.
13. Set your heart to her bulwarks,  
Consider<sup>6</sup> her palaces,  
That ye may tell to the generation following ;
14. For this God<sup>7</sup> is our God for ever and ever,  
He will be our guide unto death.<sup>8</sup>

**Critical References.**—1, *in elevation*, Kay, Perowne, Hengstenberg. 2, *in the recesses of the North*, Kay ; *upon the North side*, Prayer Book Version. 3, *high fort*, Kay ; *tower*, Perowne. 4, *at once they*, Kay ; *immediately they*, Perowne. 5, *were utterly confounded*, Perowne ; *were driven to flight*, Hupfield ; *suddenly cast down*, Prayer Book Version ; *were in consternation*, Kay. 6, *lit. divide*. 7, *That this God*, Kay ; *For such is God, our God*, Perowne. 8, *over death*, Kay ; *at death*, Hengstenberg ; *beyond death*, Syriac, Stier ; *to dying*, Hupfield.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 2, *The city, S. Matt. v. 35.*

**Explanatory Notes.**—2, *Beautiful for situation*, lit. “for elevation.” Jerusalem was a city “set on an hill” (Ezek. xxxiv. 26, Joel iii. 17); *whole earth*, possibly the Holy Land is intended here. *Zion*, the old mystical Expositors interpreted Zion (“Expectation”), of the Church Militant, Jerusalem (the Vision of Peace), of the Church Triumphant. This rule of interpretation will by no means invariably hold good, but in many instances the result of its application is strikingly apposite and beautiful; *the sides of the North*, not only did heathen mythology select a mountain for its Home of the Gods, a Mount Mêru, an Olympus, a Mountain of the Gods, but for the most part placed it far away in the inaccessible North, where it formed a “Mountain of Meeting” between heaven and earth (Isa. xiv. 13). It is, however, improbable in the extreme that any such notion had a place in the Psalmist’s thoughts. The explanations of the passage are many and varied. Some see in it a reference to the position of Mount Moriah at the northern, or north-eastern angle of the city. According to this view, the Temple and its precincts are designated as “the city of the Great King.” Zion was “the joy of the whole earth,” but northward of it lay yet another city, the city and palaces of the **LORD** of Hosts. Of other interpretations, one is that this “City of God” would be a prominent object to those who approached Jerusalem from the North. Another, on the contrary, is that it would rise in the Northern horizon before the eyes of those who like the triumphal procession advancing from Berachah (2 Chron. xx. 26-8), journeyed towards

it from the South. 4, *the Kings*, either the confederate kings of Moab Ammon and Edom, or the inferior kings or satraps among the Assyrians. Mediæval commentators discover a reference to the visit of the Magi, "the Kings of Shebah and Seba" who were to offer gifts. The picture of the assembling of the kings, of their astonished gaze, and awe-struck dispersion, is vivid in its brevity. 5, *hasted away*, a deliverance which was not the result of a battle is evidently in the mind of the Psalmist. 7, *Thou breakest, &c.*, probably this means, "Thou hast shattered the power of these kings as entirely as an Eastern hurricane wrecks a fleet composed even of the celebrated Tyrian vessels." The "ships of Tarshish" were used as a symbol of power and prosperity (Isa. ii. 12-16, Ezek. xxvii. 25). Some would see in it a warning, uttered even in the midst of their exultation, that the people should not forget God in their prosperous security, lest He should visit them with punishment as He had done aforetime when the "ships of Tarshish" were broken at Ezion-Geber (1 Kings xxii. 48). Mystical Interpreters saw in it a type of "the mighty rushing wind," "the power of the Spirit of God" which should overthrow the power of heathenism. 8, *As we have heard, &c.*, we have witnessed with our own eyes a counterpart to the former deliverances of which our fathers have told us; *for ever*, the true "city of the **LORD** of Hosts," the spiritual Jerusalem, may be assailed by "the kings of the earth," but, nevertheless, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Isa. ii. 2, Micah iv. 1, Rev. xxi. 1-3). 9, *We have thought, &c.*, it has been the subject of our contemplation (Pa. lxxiii. 17). Jehoshaphat narrated the loving-kindness

of God in the Temple (2 Chron. xx. 5-7), at the time of the invasion of Ammon Moab and Edom. Possibly a Thanksgiving Service was held there after their mutual destruction. The Jewish Church imagined that God's loving-kindness was manifested exclusively in the Temple, the Christian Church bears witness of it to all men (Acts xxii. 15). 11, *daughters, &c.*, the lesser cities of Judah (Ps. xcvi. 8). 12, *walk about Zion, &c.*, this exhortation has been variously supposed to be addressed, ironically to the enemy (which is improbable), or to the procession advancing from Berachah, bidding them not only to enter, but to go round the city; or to the inhabitants who had been shut up within the walls through fear of Sennacherib, telling them to go forth out of the city and assure themselves that it was unscathed; *tell, &c.*, they were to assure themselves by every method of the security of Zion, that they might unhesitatingly declare it to those that should come after them. If the Psalm refers to the Assyrian invasion, the enemy would count the towers in anticipation of their capture (Isa. xxxii. 18), the dwellers in Zion were now to certify themselves of their preservation. 14, *For this, &c.*, that such is our God, One Who changes not. Their past was the guarantee of their future; *unto death*, the rendering of the Chaldee Targum "like the youth," is followed by Luther. Some Commentators consider the words to be a musical direction as to the melody, but placed at the end of the Psalm, as in Hab. iii. 19. The majority, with more or less similarity of translation, consider it to mean that even at the last extremity God would deliver His people, while each successive deliverance should be a type of the final victory (Hos. xiii. 14, Rev. i. 18).

## PSALM LIV.

(GOOD-FRIDAY, MATTINS.)

**The History.**—The Inscription states that the conduct of Ziphites in betraying to Saul the place of David's refuge was the historical occasion to which the Psalm refers. Evidently composed at a time of peculiar danger, it may well be connected with this particular circumstance of the persecution of David by Saul.

**The Structure, &c.**—The First Part (verses 1-3) is a Prayer that God would hear and judge him, suffering as he was from the treachery of the Ziphites (1 Sam. xxiii. 19). The Second Part (verses 4-7) sets forth the Psalmist's assurance of being heard, with a consequent vow of Thanksgiving. The Gregorian Use appoints the Psalm for Good-Friday.

**The Inscription.**—For, “the Chief Musician on Neginoth,” see on Ps. VI., for “Maschil,” see on Ps. XXXII.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, *A Psalm of David,*  
when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David  
hide himself with us ?

1. O God, save me by Thy Name,  
And by Thy strength judge<sup>1</sup> me.
2. O God, hear my prayer,  
Hearken to the words of my mouth,
3. For strangers are risen up against me  
And oppressors<sup>2</sup> seek after my soul ;  
They have not set God before them. Selah.

4. Behold, God is mine helper,  
The Lord is with them that uphold my soul.
5. He shall reward<sup>3</sup> evil unto mine enemies ;<sup>4</sup>—  
In Thy truth destroy them,
6. An offering of a free heart<sup>5</sup> will I sacrifice unto  
Thee ;  
I will praise Thy Name, O LORD, for it is good,
7. For He hath delivered me out of all trouble ;  
And mine eye hath seen<sup>6</sup> (his desire) upon mine  
enemies.

**Critical References.**—1, *judge my cause*, Perowne ; *vindicate me*, Kay. 2, *violent men*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 3, *requite*, Perowne ; *turn back their evil*, Kay. 4, lit. *my watchers, those that observe me*, Ver. 1611, Marg. 5, Prayer-Book Version ; *with a free-will offering*, Kay, Hupfield ; *with free-will*, Perowne ; 6, *hath looked upon*, Septuagint ; *down upon*, Vulgate, Kay.

**New Testament References.**—No quotations from this Psalm occur in the New Testament.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *Thy Name*, by those Attributes which the Revelation of Thy Name discloses. The Psalmist seeks Divine aid in contrast to any human help. 3, *For strangers, &c.*, the Ziphites, the inhabitants of the hilly district near Carmel (Josh. xv. 55), acted towards David as strangers might have done. As the word may merely mean “enemies,” it is unnecessary to press this explanation (S. Jno. i. 11, ix. 29). 4, *them that uphold my soul*, David employs the phrase as a descriptive classification. God is to him the representative of the class which is present to his thoughts. He is not one out of many helpers, but Himself alone fulfils David’s conception. Help may seem to come through various channels, but God is its only source. 5, *Mine enemies*,

lit. "my watchers" (S. Mark iii. 2, S. Luke xiv. 1, S. Matt. xxvi. 14-16, S. Mark xiv. 10-11. In the two latter lies the applicability of the Psalm to Good-Friday). 6, *of a free heart*, this passage was used in the 16th century as an argument against vows (Num. xv. 3). *Thy Name*, that by which only can God be known. 7, *For He*, God Himself, or "it," His Name; *hath delivered*, the confidence of faith; *and mine eye, &c.*, "his desire," is an interpolation which fails to convey the Psalmist's meaning. David states that, in his sense of security under the Divine protection, he was able, perhaps from some rocky fastness, to look down upon and calmly survey his enemies without alarm or apprehension.

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## PSALM LVII.

(EASTER-DAY, MATTINS.)

**The History.**—After David's escape from the danger which threatened him at the court of Achish, king of Gath (1 Sam. xxi. 10-15, xxii. 1), he dwelt in the cave of Adullam, situated probably in the district which lies between Bethlehem and the Dead Sea. In so far as both his stay with Achish and his departure from him were connected with his previous flight from Saul, his temporary sojourn at Adullam might be correctly described as occurring "when he fled from Saul in the cave," any intervening incidents being disregarded. Again, when in consequence of the report of a Philistine invasion, Saul had withdrawn from the wilderness of Ziph, where he was pursuing David, the latter "went up from thence

and dwelt" on the western shore of the Dead Sea "in strongholds at Engedi" (the Fountain of the Kid) (1 Sam. xxiv. 1). Amidst these rocks, frequented by the wild goats, David found a cave which was the occasion of one of his last colloquies with Saul. This latter circumstance, perhaps, can hardly be described, except in general terms, as belonging to his wanderings, but to one or other of these occasions the Psalmist doubtless refers, although to which of them it is difficult to decide.

**The Structure, &c.**—The two stanzas into which this Psalm may be divided are marked by the recurrence at the end of each, of the same strain or refrain. The *First*, vers. 1-5, contains a prayer for mercy and an expression of the Psalmist's confidence in God. The *Second*, vers. 6-11, which begins with an allusion to the discomfiture of his enemies, is a triumphant song of praise. The Psalm is appointed in the Anglican Use for Easter-Day, doubtless with an application of the words of verse 8 to the Resurrection.

**The Inscription.**—For "To the Chief Musician" see on Psalm VI. *Al-taschith, Michtam of David, Al-tuschith*, which, literally rendered, is "Destroy not," is found as the heading of four Psalms. It has been thought by some to indicate the subject and import of the Psalm, by others to be merely the name of the melody to which it was to be sung. *Michtam* (or *Miktam*), which is found in the Inscriptions of six Psalms, is a word of obscure etymology. Some of the Rabbinical writers derived it from a word signifying "gold," and understood it to be expressive of excellence. It is in accordance with

this view that the Margin of the Version of 1611 has, "a golden Psalm," that is, a precious one. Other Rabbinical writers thought it equivalent to "humble," and applied it to David. Some modern critics adopt the meaning of "jewel" or "treasure." Another derivation is from a word meaning "hidden," as though it pointed out that the Psalm should be mystically interpreted. The opinion that it is a musical term, of the meaning of which we are ignorant, has also its advocates, among whom are the translators of the so-called Geneva Version of the Old Testament of 1560, who render it as "A certain tune." Another etymology, supported by the *Septuagint*, is the "graven" song, as though it were intended to be carved upon stone as an inscription.

To the chief Musician, Al-taschith, Michtam of David, when he fled from Saul in the cave.

1. Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me,  
For in Thee my soul' trusteth;<sup>1</sup>  
Yea under the shadow of Thy wings my refuge  
will I make,  
Until this tyranny<sup>2</sup> be overpast.
2. I will cry unto God most High,  
Unto God that performeth all for me.<sup>3</sup>
3. He shall send from heaven and save me ;—  
He that would swallow me up reproacheth !  
Selah.  
God shall send forth His mercy and His truth.
4. My soul is among lions;<sup>4</sup> I lie among them that  
are set on fire,—  
The sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows,  
And their tongue a sharp sword.
5. Set up Thyself above the heavens, O God ;  
Thy glory above all the earth.

6. They have prepared a net for my steps:—and  
pressed down my soul,<sup>5</sup>  
They have digged a pit before me;  
They have fallen into the midst of it. Selah.
7. My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed;  
I will sing and give praise.
8. Awake up, my glory; awake psaltery and harp;  
I myself will awake early.<sup>6</sup>
9. I will praise Thee, O Lord, among the people,  
I will sing unto Thee among the nations.
10. For Thy mercy is great unto the heavens,  
And Thy truth unto the clouds.
11. Set up Thyself above the heavens, O God,  
Thy glory above all the earth.

**Critical References.**—1, *has my soul taken refuge*, Kay, Perowne. 2, *the destruction*, Perowne; *until malignity*, Kay. 3, *who benefits me*, Septuagint, Vulgate, Hupfield, Hitzig, Lange; *who completes (all) for me*, Kay. 4, *with my soul I lie among lions, fire-breathing children of men*, Hitzig; *as for my soul, in the midst of lions might I lie, for burning are the sons of men*, Speaker's Commentary; *if I lie down 'tis on fire-brands*, Kay; *in the midst of lions must I lie, among those who are ready to devour*, Hupfield, Perowne. 5, *he bowed my soul*, Kay. 6, Septuagint; *by early dawn*, Kay; *I will awake the dawn*, Wordsworth's Commentary, Delitzsch, Speaker's Commentary, Hengstenberg, Perowne.

**New Testament References.**—No quotation from this Psalm occurs in the New Testament.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *Be merciful, &c.*, the Psalmist in his earnestness repeats his cry, and makes his confidence in God the ground of his plea for mercy. *Yea, under the shadow, &c.*, perhaps suggested by Deut. xxxii. 11. The expression, which is not infrequent in Scripture (Ruth ii. 12), conveys the idea of tender protection; with such a meaning Our Lord employs a modification of it (S. Matt.

**xxiii. 37).** The suggestion has been made that the phrase has been taken from the overshadowing of the Mercy-Seat by the wings of the Cherubim (Ex. xxv. 20). **2, I will cry**, confidence is followed by prayer; *that performeth, &c.*, the paraphrase of the Targum is “Who ordered the spider who wrought her web at the mouth of the cave on my account.” Possibly this may allude to some incident in David’s life, handed down by Tradition, when he may have been preserved by such an apparent proof of a cave not having any occupant. **3, from heaven**, no less an interposition would avail. *He that, &c.*, the meaning may be “notwithstanding that he that reproacheth would swallow me up,” or, “for he that reproacheth would swallow me up.” **4, I lie, &c.**, a description of David’s persecuted condition, and scarcely, as has been suggested, an expression of confidence, “I lie securely.” The fiercest of animals, the most destructive of agencies, the deadliest of weapons, are all brought forward to express the violence of his persecutors. **5, Set up Thyself, &c.**, so put forth Thy power on my behalf that heaven and earth may see in it a manifestation of Thy Glory. **6, a net for my steps** (1 Sam. xviii. 21, S. Matt. xxii. 15), or, “they set a snare for me as if I were a wild beast.” **7, fixed**, in steadfast fearlessness. **8, psaltery**, the “*viol*” of Isa. v. 12, Amos v. 23; the psaltery, or “lute,” was a six-stringed instrument of the guitar description; *will awake early*, lit. “will awake the dawn.” Some consider “the dawn” to be used adverbially for “right early,” while others deny any such adverbial use, and regard David as saying that his praises should awake the dawn, and not it him. The Talmudic legend runs that whenever the

night wind swept over the strings of David's harp, which hung beside his bed, and awoke its music, that he, aroused by the sound, would rise and sing the praises of the Law until daybreak. Our Lord's Resurrection took place at the dawn (S. Matt. xxviii. 1, S. Luke xxiv. 1, Rev. xxii. 16), hence the Anglican selection of the Psalm for Easter-Day. 9, *I will praise, &c.*, the Psalmist closes with the language of praise, which should be uttered among all nations. 11, *Set up Thyselv, &c.* (Eph. i. 17-20, iii. 10, 21).

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## PSALM LXVIII.

(WHIT SUNDAY, MATTINS.)

**The History.**—The opinion that this Psalm was written to commemorate some great occasion of bringing up of the Ark to its resting-place is the one most generally adopted. Although the Psalm contains no internal evidence which could fix its date with any approach to certainty, still some of its expressions seem to suit a particular period better than any other. The possible reference (ver. 18) to the recent captivity of the Ark in Philistia, the mention of four of the tribes as taking part in the procession (ver. 27), the distinction of Benjamin as apparently the tribe of the late "ruler," Saul, and the prominence given to Egypt and Ethiopia (ver. 31) as the great existing Empires (to the exclusion of Assyria), all seem to assign the Psalm to the age of David. The objection that the word "Temple" occurs in ver. 29 is met by the permissible translation of it as "Tabernacle." If this date is accepted,

a further question arises as to the particular event which the writer had in view. The bringing up of the Ark from the house of Obed-Edom (2 Sam. vi. 12, 1 Chron. xv. 25) meets all the requirements, and is generally accepted as the most probable occasion. Another supposition is that the return of the Ark after some successful campaign during which it had been carried with the army, is the theme. This was possibly the case in the war against the Edomites (2 Sam. viii. 14, 1 Kings xi. 15), and also, as some would gather from the language of Uriah (2 Sam. xi. 11) in the war against Ammon (2 Sam. xii. 29). Other conjectures point to the solemn installation of Solomon (1 Chron. xxviii. 5-21), or to the victory of Jehoshaphat and Jehoram over Moab (2 Kings iii. 7), or to the deliverance of Hezekiah from Sennacherib (2 Chron. xxxii. 22). Lastly, another suggestion is that the Return from the Captivity was the date of its composition, and that the Psalm describes the homeward march of the exiles, as though it had been a second Exodus.

**The Structure, &c.**—This Psalm, which is constructed on the principle of pairs of verses, is much in the style of Deborah, and contains reminiscences of the Blessing of Moses, the Prophecy of Balaam, and the Song of Deborah. Its contents may be classified as follows:—I. It opens with a call to the righteous to be glad, on the ground of the victorious march of God at the head of the hosts of Israel, verses 1-6.—II. A reference is next made to some of the circumstances of the Exodus, verses 7-10.—III. A description follows of the occupation of Canaan, verses 11-14.—IV. The central thought of the Psalm, the choice of Zion on God's dwelling place, is now

introduced, verses 15-18.—V. Then comes an ascription of praise for the overthrow of the enemy, verses 19-23.—VI. The triumphal procession which accompanied the Ark to Zion is next described, verses 24-27.—VII. A prophecy is uttered of the future submission to God of all the Kingdoms of the earth, verses 28-31.—VIII. Finally, all nations are summoned to unite in the praises of the God of Israel, verses 32-35.

A mystical interpretation would apply the Psalm to Christ's Advent, verses 1-6; to His doctrine, verses 7-16; to His Ascension, verses 17-18; to His Kingdom, verses 19-35. The Messianic bearing of the Psalm is generally recognised. The Gregorian Use follows the Jewish Ritual in appointing the Psalm for the Day of Pentecost, for which the mention of the receiving of "gifts for men" specially fits it. A further reference is to be found in the giving "power unto His people," verse 35—the "power" with which the Apostles were to be endued as a preparation for their work.

**The Inscription.**—To the Chief Musician, see Ps. VI; A Psalm or Song, see Ps. XLVIII.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm or Song of David.

1. Let God arise; let His enemies be scattered;  
And let them that hate Him flee from before Him.
2. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away;—  
As wax melteth before the fire,  
So let the wicked perish at<sup>1</sup> the presence of God.
3. But let the righteous be glad, let them rejoice  
before God,  
Yea, let them rejoice with gladness.

4. Sing unto God, sing praises to His Name,  
Extol Him that rideth upon the heavens.<sup>2</sup>  
[By] JAH His Name,<sup>3</sup> and rejoice before Him.
5. A Father of the fatherless, and a Judge<sup>4</sup> of the  
widows  
Is God in His holy habitation,
6. God setteth the solitary in a house,<sup>5</sup>  
He bringeth out those which are bound with  
chains;<sup>6</sup>  
But the rebellious dwell in a dry land.
7. O God, when Thou wentest forth before Thy  
people,  
When Thou didst march through the wilderness:  
Selah.
8. The earth shook,  
The heavens also dropped at the presence of God;  
Sinai itself<sup>7</sup> at the presence of God, the God of  
Israel.
9. A gracious rain<sup>8</sup> didst Thou send, O God;—  
[Whereby] when Thine inheritance was weary,  
Thou didst confirm it.
10. Thy congregation<sup>9</sup> hast dwelt therein;  
Thou hast prepared of Thy goodness for the poor,  
O God.
11. The Lord gave the word;  
Of those that published it great was the company.
12. Kings of armies did flee—did flee—  
And she that tarried at home divided the spoil.
13. Though ye have lien among the pots,—<sup>10</sup>  
[As] the wings of a dove covered with silver,  
And her feathers with yellow gold.—
14. When the Almighty scattered kings in it,<sup>11</sup>  
It<sup>12</sup> was as snow in Salmon.<sup>13</sup>

15. The hill of God<sup>14</sup> is the hill of Bashan,  
An high<sup>15</sup> hill the hill of Bashan.
16. Why leap ye,<sup>16</sup> ye high hills ?  
This is the hill which God desireth to dwell in,  
Yea the LORD will dwell in it for ever.
17. The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even  
many thousands ;  
The Lord is among them ;—Sinai in the holy  
place.—<sup>17</sup>
18. Thou hast ascended on high ; Thou hast led  
captivity captive ;  
Thou hast received gifts for men ;<sup>18</sup> yea, even the  
rebellious also ;  
That the LORD God might dwell among them.
19. Blessed be the Lord daily ;—  
Who helpeth us :—<sup>19</sup> the God of our salvation.  
Selah.
20. Our God is a God of salvation ;  
And unto God the LORD belong the issues<sup>20</sup> from  
death ;
21. But God shall wound the head of His enemies,  
The hairy scalp of such an one who goeth on  
still in his trespasses.
22. The Lord said, “ From Bashan will I bring again,  
“ I will bring again from the depths of the sea.
23. “ That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of  
thine enemies  
“ The tongue of thy dogs in the same.”<sup>21</sup>
24. They have seen Thy goings, O God,  
The goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary.
25. The singers went before, after followed the players  
on instruments,  
Among the damsels playing with timbrels.

26. Bless ye God in the congregations,  
The Lord, from the fountain of Israel.
27. There is little Benjamin, their ruler ;  
The princes of Judah, their company ;<sup>22</sup>  
The princes of Zebulon, the princes of Napthali.
28. Thy God hath commanded thy strength ;—  
Strengthen, O God, that which Thou has wrought  
for us.
29. Because of Thy temple at Jerusalem<sup>23</sup>  
Unto Thee shall Kings bring presents.
30. Rebuke the beast of the reeds,  
The multitude of bulls with the calves of the  
people ;—  
Till every one submit himself with pieces of  
silver ;<sup>24</sup>  
He scattereth the people that delight in war.
31. Princes shall come out of Egypt :  
Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto  
God.
32. Sing unto God, O ye kingdoms of the earth,  
Sing praises unto the Lord ;—Selah.
33. To Him that rideth upon the heaven of heavens  
which were of old.  
Lo, He doth send out His voice, a mighty voice.<sup>25</sup>
34. Ascribe ye strength unto God ;  
Over Israel is His excellency, and His strength  
in the clouds.
35. Terrible<sup>26</sup> art Thou O God ;  
Out of Thy holy places, the God of Israel !  
He that giveth strength and power unto His  
people.  
Blessed be God.

**Critical References.**—1, *from*, Kay, Perowne. 2, *Cast up a way for Him Who rides across the deserts*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch, Hengstenberg. 3, *Jah, is His Name*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch, Hengstenberg. 4, *Defender, or Advocate*, Kay; *defendeth the cause*, Prayer-Book Version. 5, *home*, Kay, Perowne; *household*, Delitzsch. 6, *into abundance*, Hupfield; *prosperity*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch; *happiness*, Wordsworth's Commentary. 7, *Yonder Sinai*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch, Wordsworth's Commentary. 8, *of free will*, Prayer-Book Version, Septuagint; *a rain of freeness*, Wordsworth's Commentary; *a shower of free-will offerings*, Kay; *a bountiful rain*, Perowne. 9, *living creatures*, Septuagint; *creatures*, Kay. 10, *Will ye lie down among the sheepfolds?* Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch, Wordsworth's Commentary. 11, *by her*, Kay. 12, *she*, Kay. 13, *Snow-white was she in Salmon*, Kay; *It is as when there is snow in Salmon*, Perowne; *The snow fell upon Salmon*, Hupfield. 14, *A mountain of God*, Kay, Perowne. 15, *many-peaked*, Perowne. 16, *lour ye*, Kay. 17, *is in holiness*, Kay. 18, lit. “*in the Adam*,” *among men*, Septuagint, Perowne, Delitzsch; *out of man*, Vulgate; *from among men*, Kay. 19, *Praised be the Lord daily*, Septuagint, Prayer-Book Version; *Who beareth our burden day by day*, Perowne, Delitzsch; *who bears us*, Hupfield; *He will bear all for us*, Kay; *If anyone lay a burden on us, Our God is our salvation*, Speaker's Commentary, Hengstenberg. 20, *By Whom we escape*, Prayer-Book Version; *means of escape from*, Perowne; *ways of egress from*, Kay. 21, *Ihat thou mayst strike thy feet in blood, That the tongue of thy dogs may have its portion from the enemy*, Perowne, Delitzsch. 22, lit. *heap of stones, bulwark*, Kay. 23, Kay; *from Thy Temple, up to Jerusalem*, Perowne. 24, *Aben-Ezra; so that they humbly bring pieces of silver*, Prayer-Book Version; *each humbly makes suit with pieces of silver*, Kay; *Trample under foot those that have pleasure in silver*, Perowne. 25, lit. *a voice of strength*. 26, *Awful is God*, Kay.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 5, *a Father, &c.*, S. John xiv. 18. 18, *Thou hast ascended*, Eph. iv. 8, Heb. i. 3.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *Let God arise, &c.*, these were the words employed when the Ark was to set forward (Num. x. 35), with the difference that “Elohim” is here substituted for the “Jehovah” of the Pentateuch. The Name setting forth the more

restricted Covenant relationship, is replaced by that which declared that the "God of Israel" was the God of the "kingdoms of the earth." The Ark was the symbol of the Divine Presence. 2, *as smoke, &c.*, the two figures express the transitoriness and instability of all earthly power. A reference, which seems somewhat far-fetched, has been suggested to the Pillar of Smoke. 3, *the righteous*, Israel, the ideally "righteous nation" (Isa. xxvi. 2). 4, *Extol Him, &c.*, the rendering of this verse in the Version of 1611 and in the Prayer Book Version is faulty. The correct translation is "Cast up a way for Him Who rides across the deserts." The word *Extol* does not here refer to praise, but means "take up out of His way all obstacles" (Isa. xl. 3-4, lvii. 14, lxii. 10). The translation "heavens" comes from the Targum and perhaps was connected there with the Rabbinical notion that the "heaven of heavens" (Deut. x. 14) was devoid of stars. The Prayer Book Version, "as it were upon an horse," is a paraphrastic addition to the Text. The reference is to the advance of the Ark through the Wilderness. *By Jah*, "by" is erroneously inserted (to carry out the idea of praise). *Jah* is an intensified form of *Jehovah*, "Jah is His Name," the Psalmist asserts the identity of *Elohim* and *Jehovah*. 5, *A Father, &c.*, this God of glory is also full of compassion (Deut. x. 18, Isa. lvii. 15, S. Jno. xiv. 18, S. Jas. i. 27); *Judge*, rather *Advocate* (S. Jno. xiv. 16-18). 6, *in a house*, rather in a household, after the Wandering the Israelites finally divided the land among their families. "In the society of saints and angels," the "household of God" (Eph. ii. 19). The Prayer Book Version is a mistaken one here; *with chains* should be "into

happiness ;" *But the rebellious*, some see a reference to Num. xiv. 35. 7, *O God, &c.*, some instances of the manifestation of God's glory are now set forth (Deut. xxxiii. 2, Judges v. 4), but *Jehovah* is again replaced by *Elohim*. 8, *The earth shook* (Ex. xix. 18); *dropped* (Ps. lxxvii. 17); *Sinai itself*, the Jews assert that the giving of the Law was commemorated by the Feast of Weeks, afterwards known as "Pentecost" (Ex. xix. 1-6, S. Jno. i. 17); *the God of Israel*, the covenant with Israel was made at Sinai. 9, *A plentiful rain, &c.*, lit. "a rain of free-willingness." The opinion that a literal "rain" is intended has but few advocates (though Calvin is of their number). Recent Commentators explain the words as an allusion to the fall of the manna (Num. xi. 9). The Targum explains it figuratively of the rest given to Israel after the terrors of Sinai. Early Expositors understood it mystically of spiritual refreshment, and of the Pentecostal outpouring of the spirit. 10, *Thy congregation*, the word is of doubtful meaning. Some refer it to the Israelites themselves, "the flock of His people" (Ps. lxxviii. 52). A Commentator of the 16th century finds an allusion to the animals depicted on the standards of the tribes. Others apply it to the quails, and, lastly, some refer it to Israel, spoken of (by a bold and sudden transition) as settled in the Land of Promise. 11, *The Lord gave, &c.*, this Psalm is as a whole difficult to interpret, but perhaps its greatest obscurity occurs in this portion of it. The explanations put forth are very varied ; *Of those, &c.*, when the Lord gave the word victory followed, and great was the company of the women who celebrated it by their songs and dances (Ex. xv. 20-21, Judges v. 1, 1 Sam. xviii. 6-7). The

Septuagint and Vulgate have "evangelised" instead of "published." Mystical interpretation sees here a reference to the Apostles speaking "as the Spirit gave them utterance," and to the spreading by the Church of the "gospel" of Christ's victory over the grave. 12, *Kings of armies*, perhaps a contrast is intended between their might, and the might of the LORD of Hosts. It has been conjectured that these words, together with those that follow (vers. 12-14), are actually a portion of the women's song of triumph, which the Psalmist quotes and inserts in his own poem; *she that tarried*, &c., this has been explained to mean the women, who divided the spoil which was brought home, or, those of the people who remained at home, or even to refer to the Sanctuary. 13, *pots*, this should be rendered "sheep-folds." The explanations of this most obscure passage may be broadly divided into two classes. Both see in the "sheep-folds" a symbol of pastoral ease, but the one class would paraphrase thus, "Now that the war is over and the victory gained, Israel shall return to the care of the flocks, with both her warriors and women resplendent with the spoil, which gleams and glitters like the hues upon the wings of a dove." Of the other class, some consider it to be a taunt addressed to those who took no part in the battle, "What! will ye lie among your sheep-folds unsold by the stains of battle, like doves, whose wings, &c.," or, "admiring the plumage of your doves, with their wings, &c." Others, again, would change the application of the question, and think it to be addressed reproachfully to the whole nation, "What! because one campaign is over, and one battle won, will ye consider your 'warfare accomplished,' and think that henceforth nothing lies before you

except to admire your flocks and doves?" 14, *in it*, or "by her," in which case the meaning is, by Israel's instrumentality. *It was as snow in Salmon*, this is another difficult passage. Some would translate "she was," and continue the reference to Israel, as if the verse meant, "Israel's true purity and glory lies in conflict—(snow-white was she in Salmon), not in indulgence in luxurious ease and worldly splendour." But the interpretations are so numerous that they can be only briefly stated as—"the battle took place in winter," or, "during a snow-storm;" "the hosts of the enemy were numberless as snow-flakes," or, "dispersed and disappeared as snow in a thaw," or, "Salmon glistened with their armour," or, "was whitened by their bones," or, "the prosperity of Israel after the war is as great a contrast to the gloom of her previous state, as is the snow to the dark pine-forests of Salmon, on which it falls and rests." 15, *the hill of Bashan*, the mention of Salmon turns the Psalmist's thoughts to other hills. The grandeur of the triple peaks of Anti-Lebanon (perhaps the seat of some forgotten worship) made it a fit emblem of worldly power. Men esteemed it as "a hill of God," as of far more importance than the lowlier Zion. But though the world is powerful, the Church of God is more powerful still, because it is the hill which He desireth to dwell in. 16, *leap ye*, rather "lour ye," scowl, or look disdainfully; *This is, &c.*, Zion is the hill where God will abide, not as on Sinai for a season, but "for ever." 17, *The chariots, &c.*, the invisible hosts of God (2 Kings vi. 17, Heb. xii. 22). *Sinai in the Holy Place*, the Rabbis supply "as in;" the Prayer-Book Version, which adopts it, is also incorrect. The Version of 1611 seems to understand

the passage as, "The Lord is among them in the Holy Place as He was in Sinai." One translation suggested is, "The Lord among them is come from Sinai into the Holy Place." Modern Commentators with a very general consent render it, "Sinai is in the Holy Place," that is, "the glory which at Sinai surrounded the Divine Presence is now in the Holy Place," an assertion that the Divine Presence is now as real in Zion as once it was on Sinai. 18, *Thou hast led, &c.*, lit. "a captivity captive." This is variously explained as "Thou hast put an end to the Captivity of the Ark," or, "Thou hast led up those who were captives," the Israelites. *Gifts for men*, the literal translation is, "in the Adam." The old Expositors saw in this a reference to the "holy Incarnation," the Manhood of the Second Adam, in which He received gifts, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, in order to bestow them on men (S. John i. 16). Another explanation, which accords with the *Vulgate*, is "from among men," that is, that men themselves were the gifts. S. Paul (Eph. iv. 8) emphasises the purpose of the reception, they were taken in order to be given, He "gave gifts unto men." In the Old Dispensation the Levites were men "given as a gift"—to do the service of the tabernacle (Num. xviii. 6). In the New Dispensation He gave "some Apostles, and some prophets." *The rebellious also* (1 Tim. i. 12, 13, 1 Cor. vi. 11). 19, *Blessed, &c.*, this verse is variously rendered, the "with benefits" of the Version of 1611 is an interpolation. The most general view is that the word translated "loadeth" does not mean "to lay a burden upon" anyone, but rather to bear it for anyone, and that the Psalmist's meaning is, "God will sustain both us and our burdens" (Isa. liii. 4, S. Matt. viii. 17, S.

John xix. 17, 1 Peter ii. 24). Some consider that it is the Ascription of Praise, which should be made "daily;" others, that the note of time refers to the burdens, "Who bears our burdens (or helpeth us) daily." 21, *hairy scalp*, abundance of hair is the mark of youth and vigour. Any reference to Absalom would quite forbid the supposition that the Psalm was composed by him who cried, "O Absalom, my son, my son." 22, *Will I bring again*, &c., though the enemies should fly for concealment to the forests of Bashan or to the depths of the Dead Sea, thence would I bring them back for destruction (Amos ix. 3, S. Luke xix. 27); or, I will deliver my people, as I did from Og, the King of Bashan, and from Pharaoh at the Red Sea. The Targum relates that some Jewish women who were being carried captive to Rome, and were dreading their fate, plunged into the sea on the voyage, repeating this verse (Rev. xx. 13). 24, *goings*, &c., the Psalmist returns to a description of the carrying up of the Ark. The people have seen the triumphal procession. 26. *Bless ye*, &c., this verse is not improbably a portion of the strain of triumph; *fountain*, two explanations are put forward, "ye, whose descent can be traced from Abraham," or, "let your praises ascend, from the Temple, the great fountain of Israel's praise. 27, *There is*, &c., in the procession appear Benjamin, the tribe of Saul, Judah, the royal tribe, Zebulun, and Napthali, celebrated for their heroism (Judges v. 18). Mystical interpretation sees here S. Paul and the other Apostles (1 Cor. xv. 9, Acts xx, 24, 1 Cor. iv. 9). 28, *strengthen*, &c., an address to Israel, followed by a prayer to God. 30, *the beast of the reeds*, the hippopotamus has been suggested as the animal

intended, the crocodile is the more probable symbol of Egypt (Isa. xix. 1-7). S. Augustine curiously allegorises "the reed" as meaning Holy Scripture (the instrument of writing put for the thing written), and explains the passage of those who wrest the "Scriptures unto their own destruction." *Till every one, &c.*, this difficult passage admits of the rendering, "Trample under foot those that take pleasure in silver." Silver was commonly used as the material for ornaments in Egypt (Gen. xliv. 2, Ex. iii. 22). 31, *Egypt, &c.* (Acts ii. 10-11, viii. 26-27); *her hands*, filled with gifts. 33, *the heavens* (Deut. xxxiii. 26); *His voice* (Ps. xviii. 13, Job xxxvii. 34, S. John xii. 28, 29, v. 28). 35, *power unto his people* (S. Luke x. 19, xxiv. 49, Acts i. 8).

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## PSALM LXIX.

(*GOOD-FRIDAY, EVENSONG.*)

**The History.**—As the style of this Psalm is unlike that of David, a question has arisen as to whether it is his composition. The argument that some of the circumstances which it narrates did not, so far as we know, occur in David's history, would hold good of the history of the other suggested writer, Jeremiah. It may be granted that the expression in Rom. xi. 9., "and David saith," may be only a concise yet vague form of reference to the Book of Psalms, yet the Inscription attributes this

Psalm to David, and it may belong to the one or other of two periods of his history. Absalom's rebellion may have caused its composition (2 Sam. xv. 30-31), and the bitterness expressed in the Psalm has been supposed to have been directed against Ahithophel. Or, it may have been connected with the conspiracy of Joab and Abiathar which sought to place Adonijah upon the throne (1 Kings i. 7). It is possible that an allusion may exist in the 22nd verse to 1 Kings i. 9, 41, 49, 50. Some Commentators, however, prefer to regard Jeremiah as the writer, in whose mouth some of the language (ver. 2) would be appropriate (Jcr. xxxviii. 6).

**The Structure, &c.**—This Psalm is made up of two main and equal divisions, each consisting of minor clauses. In the *First* portion, which as a whole ends with the 18th verse, the Psalmist laments the misery of his condition (vers. 1-4). He then recounts the persecutions which he underwent and the occasions of them (vers. 5-12). After this he makes his own misery and God's mercy his plea for deliverance (vers. 13-18). In the *Second* portion (vers. 19-36) he dwells on the conduct of his enemies towards him (vers. 19-21). He calls down God's vengeance upon them (vers. 22-29). He further expresses his joy at his deliverance (vers. 30-31), which will encourage others (vers. 32-33). Lastly, he pours forth his praises in the assurance that God will save Zion (vers. 34-36). The Ambrosian Use allots this Psalm to Good-Friday. The Sarum Use employed it on Maundy-Thursday. Many of its expressions are literally applicable to the circumstances of our Lord's Passion.

**The Inscription.**—For the “chief Musician,” see on Psalm VI. ; for “Shoshannim,” see on Psalm XLV.

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, *A Psalm of David.*

1. Save me O God ;  
For the waters are come in unto my soul.
2. I sink in mire of the depth, where there is no standing;<sup>1</sup>  
I am come into depth of waters where the floods overflow me.
3. I am weary of my crying ; my throat is dried ;  
Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.
4. More than the hairs of my head are they that hate me without a cause ;  
Mighty are they that would destroy me, mine enemies, wrongfully ;  
That which I took not away,<sup>2</sup> I then restored.
5. O God, Thou knowest my foolishness,  
And my guiltiness is not hid from Thee.
6. Let not them that wait on Thee be ashamed for my sake, O Lord God of hosts ;  
Let not them that seek Thee be confounded through me,<sup>3</sup> O God of Israel.
7. Because for Thy sake I have borne reproach ;  
Shame hath covered my face.
8. I am become a stranger unto my brethren,  
And an alien unto my mother’s children ;
9. For the zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up,  
And the reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen upon me.
10. I wept and chastened my soul with fasting,<sup>4</sup>  
And that was turned to my reproach.

11. I made sackcloth also my garment,  
And I became a proverb to them.
12. They that sit in the gate speak against me,—<sup>5</sup>  
And I was the song of the drinkers of strong drink.
13. But as for me, my prayer is unto Thee, O LORD,  
in an acceptable time;<sup>6</sup>  
O God, in the multitude of Thy mercy, hear me,  
in the truth of Thy salvation.
14. Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink,  
Let me be delivered from them that hate me,  
and out of the deep waters.
15. Let not the water-flood overflow me,  
Neither let the deep swallow me up;  
And let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.
16. Hear me,<sup>7</sup> O LORD, for good is Thy loving-kindness  
According to the multitude of Thy tender mercies  
turn unto me.
17. And hide not Thy face from Thy servant,  
For trouble is on me; make haste and hear me.
18. Draw nigh unto my soul and redeem it;  
Because of mine enemies deliver<sup>8</sup> me.
19. THOU hast known my reproach and my shame  
and my dishonour,  
Mine adversaries are all before Thee.
20. Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full  
of heaviness;<sup>9</sup>  
And I looked for some to take pity,<sup>10</sup> but there  
was none,  
And for comforters, neither found I any.
21. They gave me also gall for my meat,<sup>11</sup>  
And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

22. Let their table before them become a snare,  
And that become a trap which should have been  
for their welfare.<sup>12</sup>
23. Let their eyes be darkened that they see not,  
And make their loins to shake continually.
24. Pour out upon them Thine indignation,  
And let Thy wrathful anger take hold of them.
25. Let their habitation<sup>13</sup> be desolate ;  
And let none dwell in their tents.
26. For they persecute him whom Thou hast smitten,  
And they talk to<sup>14</sup> the grief of Thy wounded.
27. Add iniquity unto their iniquity ;  
And let them not come into Thy righteousness.
28. Let them be blotted out of the Book of the living,  
And not be written with the righteous.
29. But I am poor and sorrowful ;  
Let Thy salvation, O God, set me on high.
  
30. I will praise the Name of God with a song,  
And will magnify Him with thanksgiving.
31. This also shall please the LORD better than an ox  
Or bullock that hath horns and hoofs.<sup>15</sup>
32. The humble<sup>16</sup> shall see this and be glad ;—  
Ye that seek after God—your heart shall live.<sup>17</sup>
33. For the LORD heareth the poor,  
And despiseth not His prisoners.
34. Let the heavens and earth praise Him,  
The seas and everything that moveth therein.
35. For God will save Zion, and build the cities of  
Judah ;  
That they may dwell there and have it in  
possession.
36. The seed also of His servants shall inherit it,  
And they that love His Name shall dwell therein.

**Critical References.**—1, where no ground is, Prayer Book Version; where is no standing ground, Kay. 2, That which I did not rob, Perowne; what I took not wrongfully, Kay. 3, disgraced in me, Kay. 4, myself with fasting, Prayer Book Version; I afflicted my soul with fasting, Septuagint, Vulgate, Hupfield; I wept in the fasting of my soul, Hitzig; with my very soul in fasting, Kay; wept away my soul in fasting, Perowne; I, my soul, wept fasting, Delitzsch. 5, talk of me, Perowne; moralize upon me, Kay. 6, in a time of grace, Kay; O LORD, in an acceptable time, Kay, Delitzsch; in an acceptable time, O God, Perowne, Hupfield; a time of good pleasure, Perowne. 7, answer, Kay. 8, ransom, Kay; redeem, Perowne. 9, I am sick, Perowne, Kay. 10, for sympathy, Perowne; pity, Kay. 11, Perowne, Delitzsch; as, Kay; put gall into my mouth, Septuagint, Ewald. 12, an occasion of falling, Prayer Book Version; a recompense and a stumbling block, Septuagint; and a snare to them in their security, Kay; and when they are in peace, let it be a trap, Perowne. 13, encampment, Perowne. 14, of the pain, Kay, Delitzsch. 15, horned and hoof-dividing, Kay. 16, afflicted, Perowne, Delitzsch. 17, Ye that seek the Lord—let your heart live, Perowne, Kay, Delitzsch.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 4, they that hate, &c., S. Jno. xv. 25. 9, For the zeal, &c., S. Jno. ii. 17; the reproaches, Rom. xv. 3. 22, 23, Let their table, &c., Rom. xi. 9-10. 25, Let their habitation, Acts i. 20.

**Explanatory Notes.**—1, For the waters, &c., the usual emblem of overwhelming trouble (S. Luke xii. 50). 3, my crying, (Heb, v. 7); is dried (S. Jno. xix. 28); I wait (Heb. xii. 3). 4, More than, &c. (S. Luke xxiii. 1), the Psalmist dwells on the number, then on the power of his enemies; without a cause (S. Jno. xix. 4); Mighty, &c. (S. Jno. xix. 10); That which I, &c., possibly an assertion of innocence in a proverbial form, or a statement that David withdrew at Absalom's rebellion from the throne which nevertheless he had not seized upon. 5, O God, &c., the Psalmist passes to a confession of sin, his persecutors might bring false charges against him, but his real

guiltiness was known to God. 6, *Let not them, &c.*, let not those who know of my penitence, and of my trust in Thee, see me seemingly abandoned. As the LORD of Armies, Thou hast the power, as the God Israel, the will, to help me. 7, *Because, &c.*, another plea why help should be given him is, that he suffered for God's sake. 8, *I am become, &c.* (S. Jno. i. 11, ix. 29, S. Luke xxiv. 18); *an alien* (S. Jno. vii. 5, viii. 48, S. Mark iii. 21-31). 9, *For the zeal, &c.*, if this applied in the first instance to David, it will refer to "all his trouble" in making preparation for the building of the House of the LORD (S. Jno. ii. 13-17). 10, *with fasting* (S. Matt. iv. 2-3). 11, *sackcloth*, a texture woven out of dark goats' hair, used as the garb of mourners (2 Kings vi. 30). 12, *in the gate*, the gate of an Eastern town was the resort of "all sorts and conditions of men." The idle and the busy were both to be found there. It was the place for discussing the events of the day, and for the transaction of business; *speak against me*, men of all classes ranks and characters made him the theme of their conversation. 13, *But as for me, &c.*, some Commentators consider the "acceptable time" to be that in which the Psalmist offered up his prayer. Others punctuate the sentence to end at "O LORD," and read the following petition as, "In a time of Thy good-pleasure, O God, hear me," &c. 15, *let not the pit, the dry cistern* (Jer. xxxviii. 6); *shut her mouth, &c.*, let not the stone be placed upon the opening (S. Matt. xxvii. 60, xxviii. 2). 19, *Thou hast known, &c.*, the Psalmist now renews his entreaty. 21, *gall*, it is uncertain what is intended, probably some bitter herb (Deut. xxix. 18, xxxii. 32, Jer. ix. 15, Lam. iii. 19, Hos. x. 4), possibly the poppy. It is inapplicable

to David. The drink mentioned in S. Matt. xxvii. 34, was probably some stupefying potion. 22, *Let their table, &c.*, perhaps their sacrificial feasts. All this, if regarded as prophetical, was fulfilled. The occurrence of the Passover at the time added to the horrors of the siege of Jerusalem; *snare*, the "recompense" of the Septuagint, and of Rom. xi. 9, is the result of a different vowel punctuation. 25, *desolate* (S. Matt. xxiii. 38, xxiv. 1-2); *tents*, the Feast of Tabernacles ceased to be observed after the destruction of Jerusalem. 26, *talk to the grief*, this should be "talk of the grief," they enlarge and dwell on every detail of my sufferings. 27, *Add iniquity, &c.* (S. Matt. xxiii. 32); *come into*, partake of. 28, *Let them be blotted out, &c.*, removed, as it were, from the roll of citizens (Ex. xxxii. 32). 29, *But I am poor, &c.* (2 Cor. viii. 9, S. Matt. viii. 20); *set me on high* (Heb. i. 3). 31, *horns and hoofs*, one of the clean beasts (Lev. xi. 3, 47) of an age fit for sacrifice. 33, *For the LORD, &c.*, the Psalmist's certainty of this is the ground of his praise; *prisoners*, some think that this and ver. 35 point to the period of the Captivity as the date of the composition of the Psalm. It may, however, be merely a general term for such as are in trouble. 35, *will save*, this hardly supports Jeremiah's authorship, as he constantly prophesied the destruction, and not the salvation, of Zion; *build*, keep them in security and uphold them. Perhaps an anticipation by David of that which Solomon was the instrument of carrying out (1 Kings ix. 17-19).

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## PSALM LXXXV.

(CHRISTMAS-DAY, MATTINS.)

**The History.**—Although no mention is made of David in the Inscription of this Psalm, some Commentators think that it nevertheless was composed by him on his return to Jerusalem after the suppression of Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam. xix. 14). If this were the case “captivity” in ver. 1 would have to be understood figuratively for “trouble” (Job xlii. 10). As the language of the Psalm seems to allude to a national, rather than to a personal mercy, another opinion is, that it has reference to the deliverance of the land and people from a second impending Egyptian bondage under Shishak. That Egyptian king was permitted to go up against Jerusalem and despoil it in the fifth year of the reign of Rehoboam as a punishment for the “folly” (verse 8) of himself and of his people in forsaking the “law of the Lord, and all Israel with him” (2 Chron. xii. 1-12). The Psalm has also been ascribed to the times of Jeremiah, as if it were written in prophetic anticipation of the Return from Babylon (Jer. xxx. 3, 10, 11, 18, 19). Lastly, it has been held that the Psalm was composed after the Restoration. This, as being the turning of their captivity, was held to be a pledge that other mercies were in store for the people, and that glory would dwell in the land, which should then yield its increase to its rightful possessors (Neh. ix. 37).

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm consists of Two, nearly equal, Portions. The *First* (verses 1-7) commences with an acknowledgement of God's

mercies, followed by a Prayer, which is offered either by, or on behalf of, the people. In this Prayer a continuance is sought of that mercy which had been already vouchsafed (verse 4-7). The Second Part contemplates a glorious Future (verses 8-13) as the result of the fulfilment of the Divine Promise. Some have supposed that the first portion was sung by the priest, the last by the people. The Psalm is appropriated to Christmas-Day in the Gregorian Use. While the first verse points to Him who came to "preach deliverance to the captives," the later ones foreshadow the dwelling among men of the Incarnate Word, Who "dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory."

**The Inscription.**—For "the chief Musician," see on Psalm VI.; For, "A Psalm for the Sons of Korah," see on Psalm XLV.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah.

1. Thou hast been gracious,<sup>1</sup> O LORD, unto Thy land ;  
Thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob.
2. Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of Thy people,  
Thou hast covered all their sin. Selah.
3. Thou hast taken away<sup>2</sup> all Thy wrath,  
Thou hast turned from the fierceness of Thine anger.
4. Turn us,<sup>3</sup> O God of our salvation,  
And cause to cease Thine anger toward us ;
5. Wilt Thou for ever be angry with us ?  
Wilt Thou draw out Thine anger to all generations ?

6. Wilt Thou not revive us again ;  
That Thy people may rejoice in Thee ?
7. Shew us Thy mercy, O LORD,  
And grant us Thy salvation.
8. I will hear what God, the LORD, will speak ;—  
For He will speak peace unto His people and to  
His saints,  
But let them not turn again to folly.<sup>4</sup>
9. Surely, nigh unto them that fear Him is His  
salvation,  
That glory may dwell in our land.
10. Mercy and truth are met together,  
Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
11. Truth shall spring out of the earth,  
And righteousness shall look down from heaven.
12. Yea, the LORD shall give good,  
And our land shall yield her increase.
13. Righteousness shall go before Him,  
And shall set [us] in the way of His steps.<sup>5</sup>

**Critical References.**—1, *Thou art now gracious*, Kay.  
2, *withdrawn*, Perowne ; *gathered in*, Kay. 3, Perowne ; *turn  
back to us*, Targum, Kay, Delitzsch. 4, Perowne, Delitzsch ;  
*self-confidence*, Kay. 5, *shall make His footsteps a path*, Speaker's  
Commentary, Wordsworth's Commentary ; *shall make His foot-  
prints a highway*, Kay ; *shall make known the way of His steps*,  
Hitzig ; *walk in His steps*, Hupfield ; *and follow His footsteps in  
the way*, Perowne.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 10, *Mercy and  
truth*, S. Jno. i. 14.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *Thou hast, &c.*, the  
Psalm opens by recounting six blessings bestowed  
upon the people, *O LORD*, the Name revealed at the  
close of the Egyptian bondage. 2, *Thou hast covered*,

Mediæval Interpreters see a reference to the covering of sin in Baptism, as the people's enemies were covered by the Red Sea. 3, *all Thy wrath*, the sin having been covered, the wrath is removed (Rom. v. 9, Eph. ii. 3, 1 Thess. v. 9). 4, *Turn us, &c.*, He who turned from His wrath is now besought to turn the people to Himself, or, as some explain, to turn Himself to them. Past mercies are made a plea for further ones. 5, *Wilt Thou draw out, &c.*, by delaying the coming of the Messiah. 6, *in Thee*, not in any earthly blessings. The petition that they might rejoice in God is based on the fact that they are His people. 7, *Thy salvation* (S. Luke i. 68-69). 8, *I will hear, &c.*, the Psalmist waits in faith for an answer to his prayer. *For He will speak, &c.* (Lev. xxvi. 3-13); *peace* (S. Jno. xiv. 27, xvi. 33). The possession is the result of the promise. *His people, &c.*, a Rabbinical writer sees in "His people" the Jews, and the Gentiles, in such as were "called to be saints;" *folly*, self-confidence, rebellion, as under David; transgression of the Law, as under Rehoboam, idolatry, as before the Captivity. 9, *His salvation* (S. Luke ii. 30); *glory*, the glory of His own presence. the Shechinah was absent from the second Temple (Haggai ii. 7, Mal. iii. 1, S. Jno. i. 14, ii. 11). 10, *met together*, as re-united friends; *truth* (S. Jno. i. 17, xiv. 6). The mercy of God confirmed the truth of His promises (S. Luke i. 54-55), the righteousness of Christ wrought peace (Rom. v. 1, 18, 19, 2 Cor. v. 21, Eph. ii. 14-15, Gal. v. 22). 11, *out of the earth*, the Rabbinical writers applied this to the birth of the Messiah (1 Cor. xv. 47). "Although He be God and Man, yet He is not two, but one Christ." 12, *her increase*, temporal should follow spiritual blessings,

**The Inscription.**—For the “chief Musician,” see on Psalm VI. ; for “Shoshannim,” see on Psalm XLV.

To the chief Musician upon Shoshannim, *A Psalm* of David.

1. Save me O God ;  
For the waters are come in unto my soul.
2. I sink in mire of the depth, where there is no standing;<sup>1</sup>  
I am come into depth of waters where the floods overflow me.
3. I am weary of my crying ; my throat is dried ;  
Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.
4. More than the hairs of my head are they that hate me without a cause ;  
Mighty are they that would destroy me, mine enemies, wrongfully ;  
That which I took not away,<sup>2</sup> I then restored.
5. O God, Thou knowest my foolishness,  
And my guiltiness is not hid from Thee.
6. Let not them that wait on Thee be ashamed for my sake, O Lord God of hosts ;  
Let not them that seek Thee be confounded through me,<sup>3</sup> O God of Israel.
7. Because for Thy sake I have borne reproach ;  
Shame hath covered my face.
8. I am become a stranger unto my brethren,  
And an alien unto my mother’s children ;
9. For the zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up,  
And the reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen upon me.
10. I wept and chastened my soul with fasting,<sup>4</sup>  
And that was turned to my reproach.

1. I made sackcloth also my garment,  
And I became a proverb to them.
2. They that sit in the gate speak against me,—<sup>5</sup>  
And I was the song of the drinkers of strong drink.
3. But as for me, my prayer is unto Thee, O LORD,  
in an acceptable time;<sup>6</sup>  
O God, in the multitude of Thy mercy, hear me,  
in the truth of Thy salvation.
4. Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink,  
Let me be delivered from them that hate me,  
and out of the deep waters.
5. Let not the water-flood overflow me,  
Neither let the deep swallow me up;  
And let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.
6. Hear me,<sup>7</sup> O LORD, for good is Thy loving-kindness  
According to the multitude of Thy tender mercies  
turn unto me.
7. And hide not Thy face from Thy servant,  
For trouble is on me; make haste and hear me.
8. Draw nigh unto my soul and redeem it;  
Because of mine enemies deliver<sup>8</sup> me.
9. THOU hast known my reproach and my shame  
and my dishonour,  
Mine adversaries are all before Thee.
10. Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full  
of heaviness;<sup>9</sup>  
And I looked for some to take pity,<sup>10</sup> but there  
was none,  
And for comforters, neither found I any.
11. They gave me also gall for my meat,<sup>11</sup>  
And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

A Song or Psalm for the sons of Korah, to the chief Musician upon Mahalath Leannoth, Maschil of Heman the Ezrahite.

1. O LORD, God of my salvation,  
Day and night have I cried before Thee.
2. Let my prayer come before Thee,  
Incline Thine ear unto my cry.
3. For my soul is full of trouble,<sup>1</sup>  
And my life draweth nigh unto the grave.<sup>2</sup>
4. I am counted with them that go down into the pit,  
I am as a man that hath no strength;
5. Among the dead, free,<sup>3</sup>  
Like the slain, that lie in the grave,  
Whom Thou rememberest no more.  
And they are cut off from Thy hand.
6. Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit,  
In a place of darkness<sup>4</sup> in the deeps.
7. Thy wrath lieth hard upon me,  
And with all Thy waves hast Thou afflicted.  
Selah.
8. Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me,  
Thou hast made me an abomination unto them—  
Shut up am I, and I cannot come forth.
9. Mine eye faileth<sup>5</sup> by reason of affliction;  
I have called upon Thee, O LORD, daily.  
I have stretched out my hands unto Thee.
  
10. Wilt Thou shew wonders unto the dead ?  
Shall the dead<sup>6</sup> arise and praise Thee ? Selah.
11. Shall Thy lovingkindness be declared in the grave ?  
Thy faithfulness in destruction ?

12. Shall Thy wonders be known in the dark ?  
And Thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness ?
13. But I,—unto Thee, O LORD, have cried,  
And in the morning shall my prayer come before Thee.<sup>7</sup>
14. Why, LORD, castest Thou off my soul,  
Why hidest Thou Thy face from me ?
15. Afflicted am I and ready to die, from my youth up;  
I suffer Thy terrors ; I am distracted.<sup>8</sup>
16. Thy fierce wrath goeth over me ;  
Thy terrors<sup>9</sup> have cut me off.
17. They came round about me like water, all the day ;  
They compassed me about together.
18. Lover and friend hast Thou put far from me ;  
Mine acquaintance—[into] darkness.<sup>10</sup>

**Critical References.**—1, *sated with sorrows*, Kay ; *satiated with evils*, Perowne. 2, *unto hell*, Prayer Book Version ; *Hades*, Kay ; *unseen world*, Perowne. 3, *Septuagint*, Targum ; *dismissed*, Kay ; *cast away*, Perowne ; *my couch is among the dead*, Hitzig ; *prostrate among the dead*, Hupfield. 4, *in dark places*, Kay. 5, *wasteth away*, Perowne ; *has grown feeble*, Kay. 6, lit. *the giants*. 7, *hasten before Thee*, Kay ; *cometh to meet Thee*, Perowne, Delitzsch. 8, *exhausted*, Perowne ; *utterly helpless*, Delitzsch. 9, *horrors*, Perowne. 10, lit. *the place of darkness* ; *Thou hast hid mine acquaintance out of my sight*, Prayer Book Version ; *Mine acquaintance have become darkness* (invisible), Hitzig ; *darkness is become my sole companion*, Kay, Perowne, Hengstenberg, Hupfield, Speaker's Commentary.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 11, *destruction*, Rev. ix. 11.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *Day and night*, continually, the language is unconnected, as if the strength of the sufferer had failed, “In the day of

my crying—in the night—let my prayer come before Thee.” The Psalmist’s prayer is a persevering one (Ps. xxii. 2, Isa. xxxviii. 12). 2, *come before Thee*, as if it were a living person seeking an audience. 3, *For my soul, &c.*, he turns to God, and not to man, for help, because his soul is “full of troubles” (S. Matt. xxvi. 38, Heb. v. 7). *Unto the grave*, “Scheol,” the Hebrew word is generally considered to come from a root signifying “to make hollow.” The place of departed spirits seemingly shaped itself to the Jewish mind as an abode within the earth. But, as the expression “Abraham’s bosom” is clearly metaphorical, so does any attempted localization of “Scheol” go beyond the intimations to be found in Scripture respecting the unseen world. The English “hell,” coming as it does from the Saxon “helan,” to hide, corresponds very nearly to the Greek “Hades,” the unseen. “Hell” is by no means a universally satisfactory translation of “Scheol,” as being for the most part associated with the notion of punishment, while “Scheol” in many instances denotes simply the place of the departed, without any definite reference to either their happiness or misery. It is the place into which all must go down, and the “grave” is consequently a not unsuitable rendering (Isa. xxxviii. 10, Job xxxiii. 22). 4, *I am counted, &c.* (S. Matt. xxvii. 42); *no strength*, as one who is utterly prostrated. 5, *free*, in 2 Kings xv. 5, the word is translated “several,” in the sense of separate, or isolated. The Targum explains it to mean, free from the obligations of the Law, much in the same way that “defunct” means that all duties are done with. “I am as one who has received his discharge.” The ties, the cares, and the concerns of life affect me no longer.

Another rendering is, "I make my bed among the dead" (Job xvii. 13). *Whom Thou rememberest, &c.*, who no longer need the care of Thy providence (Gen. viii. 1); *cut off* (Isa. xxxviii. 10, 12, Job vi. 9), the occupation of spinning and of cutting off of the "thread" of life was supposed in Pagan fable to belong to the Parcae. 6, *In place of darkness*, those who consider the Psalm to belong to the period of the Captivity see here an allusion to the blinding of Zedekiah (2 Kings xxv. 7). 7, *All Thy waves*, the usual figure for afflictions. 8, *Thou hast, &c.*, the language of this verse is adduced in support of the view that Uzziah's leprosy was the occasion of the Psalm (Isa. xxxviii. 11, Job xix. 13, 19); *acquaintances*, the word should be translated "my intimate friends;" *shut up* (Job xii. 14), by my sickness, as a leper, in my prison. 9, *mine eye* (Job xvi. 20, Isa. xxxviii. 14). 10, *the dead* (Isa. xxxviii. 18), "the dead" is literally the Rephaim, "the giants." Who these Rephaim were is unknown. The first mention of them occurs in Gen. xiv. 5, and "Og, the king of Bashan," sprang from a "remnant" of the race (Deut. iii. 11). Their name came to be used as an equivalent for "the dead," but the various reasons which have been assigned for such a use are all conjectural, still, for some reason or other, the Rephaim came to be looked upon as the representative inhabitants of Scheol, as being pre-eminently the "deceased" (Isa. xxvi. 14). *Arise*, the resurrection of the body is in no way connected with the Psalmist's question, which is, "Shall these departed ones, the dwellers in Scheol, rise up there, amid 'the congregation of the dead,' and praise Thee?" Shall they be the utterers, and that the place, of Thy praises? This

verse and those which follow disclose a degree of knowledge and hope far removed from the Christian readiness "to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." The Psalmist's plea appears to be, that he would fain be the object of God's loving-kindness, for which he would render praise. Were he to pass into the place of the departed, both the help and the praise appeared to him to be alike impossible. 12, *in the dark* (Job x. 21); *forgetfulness*, of forgetting. 13, *But I*, by this the Psalmist emphatically declares that his purpose is fixed, notwithstanding all these fears. 14, *Why, LORD, &c.* (Job xiii. 24, S. Matt. xxvii. 46). 15, *from my youth up, &c.*, some Commentators consider this to be the language of one of the Exiles, contemplating the national history, and speaking in the name of the people (Jer. iii. 25, Hos. ii. 15). Mystical Interpreters apply it to the Flight into Egypt (S. Matt. ii. 13, 20). 17, *They compassed me, &c.* (Job xvi. 10). 18, *Lover and friend, &c.* (Job xix. 13, S. Matt. xxvi. 56); *mine acquaintance, &c.* (S. Matt. xxvii. 45).

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(CHRISTMAS-DAY, EVENSONG.)

**The History.**—This, the closing Psalm of the Third Book, belongs to a period in the history of Judah subsequent to the time of David. Commentators are not agreed as to the precise date to which it should be assigned. Its theme is the seemingly inexplicable contrast between the actually existing circumstances of national disaster and the

promises of the everlasting Covenant which embodied "the sure mercies of David." Some consider that the invasion of Shishak and the dangers threatening the throne of Rehoboam sufficiently explain its allusions (1 Kings xiv. 25-8, 2 Chron. xii. 1-12). Others would connect it with the history of Josiah, the great royal Reformer, whose death, when he fell at Megiddo, slain by the archers of Necho, was bewailed by the nation as the heaviest calamity which had yet fallen on "the house and lineage of David" (2 Chron. xxxv. 23-5). A still later date is suggested, in the last days of the monarchy, when Jehoiakin, together "with the goodly vessels of the House of the Lord," was carried captive to Babylon, and when the heir of the promises seemed to be but a "despised broken idol," a man of whose seed no one was to prosper, "sitting upon the throne of David, or ruling any more in Judah" (2 Chron. xxxvi. 9-10, Jer. xxii. 24-30).

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm opens,—I. With the Psalmist's determination to sing of the mercy and faithfulness of Jehovah (vers. 1-4).—II. This, together with His power, mercy, truth, and righteousness are next dwelt upon (vers. 5-18).—III. The terms of the Covenant with David are then rehearsed, with the qualification set forth that even should his descendants forsake God's Law, that not even then should God's faithfulness fail (vers. 19-37).—IV. After this, the striking contradiction presented in the apparent ruin of the House of David and its state of utter distress is strongly brought forward (vers. 38-45).—V. The Psalm then closes with an earnest pleading of God's former lovingkindnesses (vers. 46-51). The Doxology (ver. 52) is probably a later

addition ; it would seem to be an assertion that, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, God's promises are unchangeable, "Yea and Amen." The Psalm is appointed for Christmas-Day in the Gregorian Use. The reiterated appeals of the Psalmist to the Covenant made with David bring into prominence the fulfilment of that Covenant with Him who should "be called the Son of the Highest," and should receive "the throne of his father David," and who "of the seed of David" "was raised from the dead."

**The Inscription.**—For "Maschil," see Ps. XXXII; for "Ezrahite," Ps. LXXXVIII. "Ethan" was one of the sons of Zerah, the son of Judah, and was apparently famed for wisdom, as was his brother Heman (1 Kings iv. 31, 1 Chron. ii. 6).

Maschil of Ethan, the Ezrahite.

1. Of the mercies of the LORD will I sing for ever;<sup>1</sup>  
To all generations will I make known Thy faithfulness.
2. For I have said; For ever shall Thy mercy be built up;  
In the very heavens shalt Thou establish Thy faithfulness:
3. "I have made a covenant with my chosen,  
"I have sworn unto David my servant:
4. "For ever will I establish thy seed,  
"And build up to all generations thy throne."  
Selah.
5. And the heavens shall praise Thy wonders,<sup>2</sup> O LORD,  
Thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.<sup>3</sup>

6. For who in the heaven<sup>4</sup> can be compared unto the LORD,  
Among the sons of the mighty<sup>5</sup> who can be likened unto the LORD ?
7. God<sup>6</sup> [is] to be feared greatly in the assembly of the saints,  
And to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him.
8. O LORD, God of Hosts,  
Who is like unto Thee, a strong LORD ?<sup>7</sup>  
Or to Thy faithfulness round about Thee ?<sup>8</sup>
9. Thou rulest the raging of the sea ;  
When the waves thereof arise, Thou stillest them—
10. Thou hast broken<sup>9</sup> Rahab in pieces as one that is slain,  
With the arm of Thy strength Thou hast scattered Thine enemies.
11. Thine are the heavens, Thine also is the earth ;  
The world and the fulness thereof—Thou hast founded them.
12. The North and the South,—Thou hast created them ;  
Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy Name.
13. Thou hast an arm with might ;  
Strong is Thy hand, high is Thy right-hand.
14. Justice and mercy<sup>10</sup> are the establishment<sup>11</sup> of Thy throne,  
Mercy and truth shall go before Thy face.
15. Blessed the people, that know the joyful sound ;  
O LORD, in the light of Thy countenance shall they walk.
16. In Thy Name shall they rejoice all the day long ;  
And in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

17. For Thou art the glory of their strength ;  
And in Thy favour our horn shall be exalted.
18. For of the LORD is our shield,<sup>12</sup>  
And our king is of<sup>13</sup> the Holy One of Israel.
19. Then spakest Thou in vision to Thy holy one,  
And saidst, " I have laid help upon one mighty,  
" I have exalted one chosen out of the people :
20. " I have found David my servant :  
" With my holy oil have I anointed him :
21. " With whom my hand shall be established,<sup>14</sup>  
" Mine arm shall strengthen him.
22. " Also the enemy shall not exact upon him,  
" Nor the son of wickedness afflict him.
23. " And I will beat down his foes before his face,  
" And plague<sup>15</sup> them that hate him.
24. " But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be  
with him,  
" And in My Name shall his horn be exalted.
25. " I will set his hand also in the sea,  
" And his right-hand in the rivers.
26. " He shall call unto Me ; 'Thou art my Father,  
" My God and the Rock of my salvation.'
27. " Also I will make him my First-born,  
" Higher than the kings<sup>16</sup> of the earth.
28. " My mercy will I keep for him for evermore,  
" And my covenant shall stand fast with him.
29. " Also I will make his seed to endure for ever,  
" And his throne as the days of heaven.
30. " If his children forsake my Law,  
" And walk not in my judgements,
31. " If they profane<sup>17</sup> my statutes,  
" And keep not my commandments ;
32. " Then will I visit their transgressions with the rod,  
" And their iniquity with stripes ;—

33. "Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not  
utterly take from him  
"Nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.

34. "I will not break<sup>18</sup> my covenant,  
"Nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.

35. "Once have I sworn by my holiness,—  
"That I will not lie unto David.—

36. "His seed shall endure for ever,  
"And his throne as the sun before Me.

37. "As the moon shall it be established for ever;  
"And faithful the witness in heaven."<sup>19</sup> Selah.

38. But THOU—hast cast off and abhorred,  
Thou hast been wroth with thine anointed.

39. Thou hast made void<sup>20</sup> the covenant of Thy  
servant,  
Thou hast profaned his crown to the ground.

40. Thou hast broken down all his hedges,  
Thou hast brought his strong-holds to ruin.

41. All that pass by the way spoil him,  
He is a reproach to his neighbours.

42. Thou hast set up the right-hand of his adversaries,  
Thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice.

43. Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword,  
And hast not made him to stand in the battle.

44. Thou hast made his glory<sup>21</sup> to cease,  
And cast down his throne to the ground.

45. Thou hast shortened the days of his youth,  
Thou hast covered him with shame. Selah.

46. How long, O LORD, wilt Thou for ever hide  
thyself.  
Shall thy wrath burn like fire ?

47. Remember my time is—how short;  
Wherefore in vain<sup>22</sup> hast Thou made all men ?

48. What man liveth and shall not see death?  
 Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the  
 grave?<sup>23</sup> Selah.

49. Where are Thy former lovingkindnesses Lord?  
 Which Thou swarest unto David in Thy truth?

50. Remember, Lord, the reproach of Thy servants,  
 How I do bear in my bosom [the reproach of] all  
 the mighty peoples.<sup>24</sup>

51. Wherewith Thine enemies have reproached O  
 Lord,—  
 Wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of  
 Thine anointed.

52. Blessed be the Lord for evermore.  
 Amen and Amen.

**Critical References.**—1, *will I sing eternally*, Kay. 2, *thy wonder*, Kay; *wondrous*, Perowne. 3, *holy ones*, Kay, Delitzsch, Perowne. 4, *in the skies*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 5, *What is he among the Gods*, Prayer-Book Version; *sons of Gods*, Septuagint; *sons of the Gods*, Kay. 6, *A God*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 7, *the mighty LORD*, Kay. 8, *And Thy faithfulness encircles Thee*, Kay; *is round about Thee*, Perowne, Delitzsch. 9, *crushed*, Kay. 10, *Righteousness and equity*, Prayer-Book Version. 11, *basis*, Kay; *pillars*, Perowne; *foundation*, Delitzsch. 12, 13, *To the LORD belongs our shield, and our king [belongs] to the Holy One of Israel*, Kay, Delitzsch, Perowne, Hupfield, Hitzig, Hengstenberg. 14, *So that my hand shall be firm with him*, Kay. 15, *smite*, Kay. 16, *Highest of the kings*, Perowne; *Most High above the kings*, Kay. 17, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 18, *profane*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 19, *And the witness in the skies is faithful*, Kay, Delitzsch, Maurer, Hitzig. 20, *flung down*, Kay. 21, *purity*, Septuagint, Kay, Perowne. 22, *For what vanity hast Thou*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 23, *Hades*, Kay. 24, *the rebukes of many people*, Prayer-Book Version; *the whole burden of many people*, Kay.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 21, *I have found* &c., Acts xiii. 22—27, *kings of the earth*, Rev. xix. 16.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *I will sing, &c.*, the Psalmist in the midst of the most adverse circumstances relies upon the mercy and faithfulness of God, and finds in these an assurance that God's covenant promise will yet be fulfilled; *to all generations, &c.*, an assertion, either that the Church would continue a like song for ever, or that these his very words would be employed, a prophecy which is in course of fulfilment. 2, *For I have said, &c.*, the Psalmist now makes known the reason for his resolve, he had already announced the changeless character of God, the Maker of the Covenant. 3, “*I have made,*” &c., God is now introduced as speaking, and His words are a summary of the promises made to David (2 Sam. vii. 12-17, S. Luke i. 32). 4, *Thy seed, &c.*, the promise is twofold, and David is assured by it, first, of the continuance of the line of his descendants, and secondly, of the perpetuity of his throne. 5, *And the heavens, &c.*, from this point to verse 18 the faithfulness, might, mercy, truth, and righteousness of God are celebrated as being the Attributes which would insure the fulfilment of the covenant; *the heavens*, that is, the inhabitants of heaven (S. Luke ii. 9-14, Eph. iii. 10, 1 Peter i. 12); *wonders*, lit. “thy wonder,” or “wondrous,” the Mystery of the holy Incarnation, and of the holy Nativity (Isa. ix. 6). 5, 7, *saints*, the holy angels (Deut. xxxiii. 2, Job. xv. 15, S. Matt. xxv. 31); *round about Him* (Rev. vii. 11). 8, *O, LORD, &c.*, a sudden address, prompted by a sense of the greatness of the Divine Majesty. 9, *Thou rulest, &c.*, this is adduced as an evidence of the Divine power (Ex. xv. 8, 10, 19, S. Matt. viii. 27). Perhaps an allusion to the tumultuous noise of an invading army (Jer. xlvi. 8, 9). 10, *Rahab, this*

name signifies "violence," or "impetuosity," and is used for Egypt in the poetical Books (Job xxvi. 12, Isa. ii. 9, 16); in Ps. lxxvii. 4 only is it unconnected with the Exodus. If the writer had Shishak in view the passage would imply that God who had destroyed one Egyptian host would again deliver them from another. 12, *The North and the South*, some see in this a reference to Jeroboam on the one side, and to Shishak on the other; *Tabor and Hermon*, the green and wooded Tabor rose on the West, the snow-crowned Hermon on the East of the Holy Land. 13, *an arm, &c.* (S. Luke i. 51). 14, *Justice, &c.*, the Divine government rests upon these attributes; *Mercy and Truth*, these are represented as standing in the Divine Presence (1 Kings x. 8). 15, *the people*, Judah, in which the Mosaic Ritual was observed; *that know*, who not only hear the trumpet blown on the evening of the Day of Atonement immediately preceding the year of Jubilee, but who know it as a joyful sound announcing the approach of the year of rest and restitution (1 Thess. iv. 16); *in the light, &c.* (Rev. xxii. 5). 16, *In Thy Name, &c.* (Jer. ix. 24, 1 Cor. i. 30, 31). 17, *the glory*, the Presence over the ark (Rom. ix. 4, Heb. ix. 5). Some Commentators understand the meaning to be, "Thou art still our Glory, though the Ark, and Thy Presence there, have both been lost. *Strength* (1 Sam. xv. 29); *our horn*, the horn, the weapon of offence and defence of many animals, is employed as an emblem of strength, pre-eminence, and honour, and to symbolize a powerful kingdom (Deut. xxxiii. 17, 1 Kings xxii. 11, Job xvi. 15, Dan. viii. 3, Zech. i. 18, 19). 18, *For of the LORD, &c.*; rather, according to most Commentators, "Our shield belongs to the LORD,

and our king to the Holy One of Israel." Our present king, or, the King Messiah whom we expect, belongs to the LORD. If the first explanation is accepted it places the date of the Psalm before the period of the Exile at some time during the existence of the Monarchy; *our shield*, perhaps the thought was suggested by the golden shields "in the house of the forest of Lebanon" (1 Kings x. 17, xiv. 26); *of Israel*, but for the sin of Judah (1 Kings xi. 31-33) "Israel" would have still remained the national name (Ex. iii. 16), and would not have been appropriated by the Northern Kingdom (2 Sam. xx. 1-2, 1 Kings xv. 25-26). The Exiles of Judah reassumed after their Return the name of Israel (Ezra ii. 70, x. 5, Neh. xii. 47, xiii. 3, Rom. xi. 1, 26). 19, *Then speakest, Thou, &c.*, the Psalmist having dwelt upon God's attributes, returns to a further consideration of the language of the promise; *in vision, &c.* (2 Sam. vii. 17); *thy holy one*, the prophet Nathan, whose message is recorded (2 Sam. vii. 4-17, 1 Chron. xvii. 3-15); "*I have laid help, &c.*," I have given my help to David (2 Sam. xvii. 10). The substance of the promise made to David was victory over his enemies, and the position of the First-born; *I have exalted* (S. Jno. iii. 14, xii. 32, Acts v. 31, Phil. ii. 9). 20, *I have found*, the word implies diligence. The choice was not an arbitrary one; *holy oil* (Ex. xxx. 25-30, 1 Sam. xvi. 1-13, 1 Kings xix. 16, Acts iv. 27, x. 38). 22, *exact*, as a creditor does upon a debtor (S. Jno. xiv. 30). 23, *I will beat down, &c.* (S. Jno. (xviii. 6). 25, *I will set, &c.* (Gen. xv. 18). 26, *He shall call, &c.*, David never uses the title "my Father;" Our Lord employs it fifty-four times (S. Jno. v. 18). 27, *my Firstborn*, the Firstborn was by the Law devoted to

God, and had to be redeemed ; he had authority over the rest of the family, and appears to have acted as its priest (Rom. viii. 29, Col. i. 15-18, Heb. i. 2, Rev. i. 5); *higher, &c.* (Rev. xix. 16). 29, *I will make, &c.*, this promise fell short of its fulfilment in David ; *his throne*, the temporal throne disappeared at the captivity (Zech. vi. 12-13, Acts ii. 30, Rev. xxii. 3); *days of heaven* (Deut. xi. 21). 30, *If his children, &c.*, the passage is a paraphrase of 2 Sam. vii. 14. God, Who had promised, would be faithful, though David's line proved faithless. Still, punishment should follow upon transgression. 33, *from him*, David was the representative of his descendants, and the covenant made with him should stand sure, notwithstanding that chastisement for their offences might fall upon "his children" (2 Cor. i. 20). 34, *I will not, &c.*, though they profane my statutes, I will not profane my covenant. 35, *once, once for all.* 37, *"And faithful, the witness in heaven,"* these words form the subject of a variety of interpretations. The "as" of the Version of 1611 is not found in the Hebrew Text. The Rabbinical Interpreters understood them of the moon, and the passage as meaning, that though the house of David might for a time wane under temporary distress, still in due season it would return to its former glory. Several Commentators refer them to the moon, but do not adopt the Rabbinical interpretation to its full extent. A few, among whom is Luther, think that the rainbow is intended, as having been made the token of an everlasting covenant (Gen. ix. 13-16). But a large number, among whom are the earlier Commentators, explain them of God Himself, and as a solemn assertion that since He is "the witness in heaven," to the

Covenant, its fulfilment is beyond doubt, because He is "faithful." 38, *But Thou, &c.*, our calamities may seem to come from our enemies, but they are nevertheless only instruments in Thy hands. A strain, of what some consider expostulation commences here. "It is true that such are the promises of the Covenant, but see what our actual condition is, yet, how is it possible that He who has sworn by His holiness, can fail to fulfil His word." Others would interpret the passage as meaning, "It was threatened that if David's seed profaned God's statutes that punishment should follow, they have so done, but now that the chastisement has worked its appointed end, shall it not at length be removed?" 39, *Thou hast profaned, &c.*, by causing him to be a vassal, or a captive. 40, *hedges*, or "fences," "the fenced cities which pertained to Judah" (2 Chron. xii. 4). Or, possibly merely a metaphor taken from a vineyard (Ps. lxxx. 12, Isa. v. 2). 41, *All that pass, &c.*, either the invading army, or the passers by who plucked off the grapes. 43, *turned the edge*, put aside his sword, hast not permitted him to use it. 44, *his glory*, all the magnificence of the Temple and the Palace. 45, *hast shortened*, the reigns of the latter kings were brief. 46, *How long, O LORD, &c.*, the Psalmist now entreats for the removal of God's wrath. 47, *Remember, &c.*, he pleads "such is the shortness of my life that I shall not live to see Thy loving kindness unless it is speedily displayed, let me not go to the grave surrounded only by misery." 49, *loving kindness*, the same word as "mercies" in verse 1. The Psalm begins and ends with the same plea. 50, *Remember, LORD, the reproach, &c.*, Moses employs similar language with regard to the complaints of the

Israelites (Num. xi. 11-14). The reproaches here, are either those of the people themselves, or the taunts of the enemy. *How I do bear, &c.*, either, how the care of all this people is laid upon me as their nursing-father, or, how the land is over-run with invaders, or lastly, how I have to endure the reproaches which are heaped upon me. 51, *Wherewith, &c.*, the Targum explains the enemies' reproach, as their scoffing at the delay of Messiah's coming (2 Pet. iii. 4-9). Another explanation is that the anointed king is pursued with reproaches whichever way he turns. 52, *Blessed be, &c.*, if this Doxology is the composition of the writer of the Psalm it is an expression of his trust in the **LORD** under all the afflictions which he has recounted. Some consider it to have been added subsequently in order to mark the close of the Third Book of the Psalms.

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## PSALM CII.

(ASH-WEDNESDAY, EVENSONG.)

**The History.**—Commentators are generally agreed that this Psalm was written during the Captivity (probably towards its close, when the "set time," ver. 13, was approaching), as an expression of personal, and not of national feeling. With regard to the writer, the same unanimity does not exist. Some suggest an unknown exile, others, Jeremiah, Daniel, or Nehemiah, as the composer.

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm commences with an Introductory Portion, verses 1-2. After this comes the First Division of the Psalm, a complaint in which the writer describes his sad position of depression, loneliness, and persecution, verses 3-11. In the Second Division, in contrast to this, the Psalmist calls to mind the unchangeableness of God, in which, and in his firm persuasion that the time is come for the rebuilding of Zion, he finds his consolation, verses 12-22. In conclusion he prays that he may be spared to see that day, and dwells upon the eternity of God, and on the conviction that the children of God's servants shall be established before Him. As one (the fifth) of the Penitential Psalms, the Psalm was formerly recited daily during Lent. Its penitential character fits it for use on Ash-Wednesday.

**The Inscription.**—A Prayer of the afflicted, &c. The Inscription seems almost to form an integral part of the Psalm itself, and resembles the one which occurs in Habakkuk iii. 1. It describes the condition of the anonymous author.

A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the LORD.

1. O LORD, hear my prayer,  
And let my crying come unto Thee.
2. Hide not Thy face from me in the day when I  
am in trouble;  
Incline Thine ear unto me; in the day when I  
call, answer me speedily.<sup>1</sup>
3. For my days are consumed away<sup>2</sup> into smoke,  
And my bones are burned up as a fire-brand.<sup>3</sup>

4. My heart is smitten like grass, and withered ;  
So that I forget to eat my bread.
5. By reason of the voice of my groaning  
My bones cleave to my flesh.
6. I am like a pelican of the wilderness,  
I am like an owl of the desert.<sup>4</sup>
7. I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the  
house-top.
8. Mine enemies reproach me all the day ;  
They that are mad against me, are sworn against  
me.<sup>5</sup>
9. For I have eaten ashes like bread,  
And mingled my drink with weeping ;
10. Because of Thine indignation and Thy wrath ;  
For Thou hast lifted me up and cast me down.
11. My days are like a shadow that declineth,  
And I am withered like grass.
  
12. But THOU, O LORD, shalt endure for ever.  
And Thy remembrance<sup>6</sup> unto all generations.
13. Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion,  
For it is time to favour her,<sup>7</sup> yea the set time is  
come.
14. For thy servants take pleasure<sup>8</sup> in her stones,  
And favour the dust thereof.<sup>9</sup>
15. So the heathen shall fear the Name of the LORD,  
And all the kings of the earth Thy glory ;
16. When the LORD shall build up Zion,<sup>10</sup>  
He shall appear<sup>11</sup> in His glory
17. He will regard the prayer of the destitute,<sup>12</sup>  
And will not despise their prayer.
18. This shall be written for the generation to come,  
And the people which shall be created shall  
praise the LORD.

19. For He hath looked down from the height of  
His sanctuary;<sup>13</sup>  
From heaven did the LORD behold the earth ;

20. To hear the groaning of the prisoner ;  
To loose the children of death;<sup>14</sup>

21. That they may declare<sup>15</sup> the Name of the LORD  
in Zion,  
And His praise in Jerusalem :

22. When the people<sup>16</sup> are gathered together,  
And the kingdoms ; to serve the LORD.

23. He afflicted my<sup>17</sup> strength in the way ;  
He shortened my days.

24. I said : " O my God, take me not away in the  
midst of my days ;  
" Thy years endure throughout all generations.

25. " Of old Thou hast laid the foundation of the  
earth,  
" And the heavens are the work of thy hands.

26. " They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure ;  
" Yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment,  
" As a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they  
shall be changed.

27. " But Thou art the same,<sup>18</sup>  
" And Thy years shall have no end.

28. " The children of Thy servants shall continue<sup>19</sup>  
" And their seed shall be established before  
Thee."

**Critical References.**—1, *Hide not Thy face from me ; In the day when I am in trouble, incline Thine ear unto me. In the day when I call, answer me speedily*, Hupfield. 2, *waste away, Kay ; are vanished, Perowne.* 3, *Perowne ; smoulder like a firebrand, Kay ;* 4, *ruins, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch.* 5, *use me for their oath, Kay ; make their oaths by me, Perowne.* 6, *memorial,*

Kay. 7, *For it is time to have pity, Kay ; to be gracious unto her, Perowne.* 8, *think upon, Prayer-Book Version ; yearn over, Kay.* 9, *They feel pity for her dust, Kay ; cry sore over her dust, Delitzsch ; are gracious unto her dust, Perowne.* 10, *Because the LORD hath built, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch.* 11, *has appeared, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch.* 12, *poor-destitute, Prayer-Book Version, Perowne.* 13, *from His holy height, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch.* 14, *sons of death, Kay ; doomed to death, Perowne ; children appointed unto death, Prayer Book Version.* 15, *That men may declare, Perowne.* 16, *peoples, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch.* 17, *Hebrew Margin ; His strength, Hebrew Text ; He afflicted on the way with His power, Kay.* 18, *lit. But Thou art He.* 19, *have a home, Kay ; dwell, Perowne.*

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 18, *shall be created, 2 Cor. v. 17 ; Of old hast Thou, &c., Heb. i. 10, xiii. 8.*

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 2, *answer me speedily,* because of the urgency of my distress. 4, *smitten, &c.,* as grass is by the heat of the sun's rays. 6, *pelican,* although solitary birds are seen, flocks of pelicans are not uncommon, hence it has been supposed that the Psalmist is comparing the “voice of his groaning” to the loud cry of the pelican, without any reference to its solitary habits ; *wilderness,* unclaimed and uncultivated tracts of country ; *owl,* the bird is common in Eastern ruins. 7, *a sparrow,* probably a bird known as the blue-thrush, mostly seen “alone,” and having a plaintive and monotonous note. The “house-sparrow” is unknown in Palestine, and the “tree-sparrow” (Ps. lxxxiv. 3) is gregarious. 8, *are sworn against me,* rather, “use my name in their imprecations,” “May it so happen to me, as has been the case with this man” (Jer. xxix. 22). 9, *my drink,* some Commentators think that this expression, together with the reference to his enemies, points to Nehemiah, “the king's cup-bearer,” as the writer of the Psalm. 10, *For Thou hast, &c.,* as a

of wind whirls an object into the air only to h it down again. 11, *a shadow that declineth*, may possibly be an allusion to the shadow by which time is measured on a sun-dial (Isa. xxxviii. 8, & xiv. 2). 12, *But THOU, &c.*, men pass away, generation after generation, but the LORD changes . In this lay the certainty of the fulfilment of

promises. Mystical Interpreters apply these words to the "continual remembrance" which the church is bidden to make until the Lord's coming in. 13, *the set time is come*, the close of the seventy years of the Captivity was approaching (Jer. vi. 11, 12, Gal. iv. 4). 14, *For Thy servants, &c.* (Ex. i. 11, ii. 12, 17); *her stones*, lying in ruinous heaps (1 Kings v. 17, 18). The ruins of Jerusalem, never, were preferred before the palaces of Babylon. *So the heathen, &c.*, such should be the result of restoration of Zion (Rom. xi. 12). 16, *When the world, &c.* (Isa. xl. 5, Jer. xxxi. 3, 4, Haggai ii. 9, Matt. xxiv. 30, S. Luke ii. 32, 1 Peter iv. 13).

*the destitute*, the people stripped of their possessions and despoiled (Rev. vi. 10). 18, *This shall be &c.*, this prophecy shall be recorded; *And the people, &c.*, the Church of the Future (2 Cor. v. 17). *For He hath looked, &c.*, as the LORD saw the affliction of His people in Egypt (Ex. iii. 7-10), so will He look down on the prisoners in Babylon.

*That they may, &c.*, Zion, the church on earth, is to be a preaching Church (S. Mark xvi. 15); Jerusalem, the church above, is a praising one. 22, *When the people, &c.* (Rev. xxi. 23-26). 23, *He afflicted*, the consideration of his own weakness, and of the shortness of his life, is again forced on the Psalmist; *my strength*, this is the reading given in

the margin in the Hebrew, the Hebrew Text has "His strength," which is difficult of interpretation. Some Commentators explain it as "He afflicted on the way with His strength," that is, in time past He afflicted Israel in the wilderness on the way up from Egypt, but finally brought the people into Canaan. So now, though he has afflicted the people while in Exile, and will do so "on the way," as they return from Babylon, still, He will restore them to their own land. The Rabbis are divided in opinion as to whether it is God who is to be understood as afflicting, or the enemy. Another explanation considers "way" simply to mean the way of life (Job xvi. 22). 25, *Of old, &c.*, we seek to relay the foundations of Jerusalem trusting in Thee, the Great Architect of the heaven and the earth. 27, *THOU art the same*, all is transitory except Thyself (Heb. i. 2, 12, xiii. 8); *Thy years*, He, who is eternally the same, was born into Time. 28, *shall continue* (S. Matt. xvi. 18, xxviii. 20).

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## PSALM CIV.

(WHIT-SUNDAY, EVENSONG.)

**The History.**—The Psalm, which has for its theme the glory of the Creation, supplies no clue as to its writer, nor as to the occasion or date of its composition, all three are consequently unknown.

**The Structure, &c.**—The only guide to any *division* of the Psalm into stanzas is to be found in

the correspondence which exists between its successive portions and the account of the work of Creation given in the first chapter of Genesis, but the picture here is full of life and motion. The Psalm concludes with a yearning after the future Sabbath which remains for the people of God. It markedly sets forth the dependence of Creation upon the Creator, and the continuousness of his operation as of one who "worketh hitherto." Since Creation is sustained by Him Who is the Lord, and the Giver of Life, the Psalm is appropriately assigned to Whit-Sunday in the Gregorian Use.

**The Inscription.**—The Psalm, being without any Inscription, is one of those called "orphans" by the Talmudists.

1. Bless, O my soul, the LORD.  
O LORD my God, Thou art very great,  
Thou art clothed with honour and majesty ;
2. Who coverest<sup>1</sup> Thyself with light as a garment,  
Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain.
3. Who layeth the beams of His chambers in the  
waters.  
Who maketh the clouds His chariot,  
Who walketh upon the wings of the wind ;
4. Who maketh His angels spirits,  
His ministers a flaming fire.<sup>2</sup>
5. He hath founded the earth upon her bases ;  
That it should not be removed for ever.
6. With the deep as a garment Thou coverest it,  
The waters stood above the mountains.

7. At Thy rebuke they fled,  
At the voice of Thy thunder they were afraid.
8. They go up by the mountains, they go down by  
the valleys;  
To the place which Thou hast appointed for them.
9. Thou hast set them a bound ; that they may not  
pass over,  
That they turn not again<sup>5</sup> to cover the earth.
10. Who sendeth the springs into the valleys,<sup>6</sup>  
Which run<sup>7</sup> among the hills.
11. They give drink to every beast of the field,  
The wild asses quench their thirst.
12. By them<sup>8</sup> shall the fowls of the air have their  
habitation,  
Which sing<sup>9</sup> among the branches.
13. He watereth the hills from His chambers ;  
With the fruit of Thy works is the earth  
satisfied.
14. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle,  
And herb for the service<sup>10</sup> of man ;  
That he may bring forth food out of the earth.
15. And wine maketh glad the heart of man,  
To make his face shine with oil,<sup>11</sup>  
And bread strengtheneth man's heart.
16. The trees of the LORD are full,<sup>12</sup>  
The cedars of Lebanon, which He hath planted;
17. Wherein the birds make their nests ;  
The stork—the fir-trees are her home,
18. The high mountains are for the wild-goats,  
The rocks are a refuge for the conies.
19. He appointed the moon for certain seasons,  
The sun knoweth his going down.

20. Thou makest darkness, and it is night ;  
Wherein do creep forth all the beasts of the forest.
21. The young lions roar after their prey,  
And seek their meat from God.
22. The sun ariseth ; they get them away together.  
And lay them down in their dens.
23. Man goeth forth unto his work,  
And to his labours,<sup>13</sup> until the evening.
24. How manifold are Thy works, O LORD !  
In wisdom hast Thou made them all,  
The earth is full of Thy riches.
25. This sea,<sup>14</sup> so great and wide,—  
Wherein are creeping things innumerable,  
Beasts, both small and great.
26. There go the ships ;  
There is Leviathan, whom Thou hast formed to  
play therein.<sup>15</sup>
27. All these wait upon Thee,  
That thou mayest give them their meat in due  
season.
28. [That] Thou givest them ; they gather :  
Thou openest Thine hand ; they are filled with  
good.
29. Thou hidest Thy face ; they are troubled ;  
Thou takest away their breath ; they die<sup>16</sup>  
And return to their dust.
30. Thou sendest forth Thy spirit ; they are created ;  
And Thou renewest the face of the earth.
  
31. The glory of the LORD shall<sup>17</sup> endure for ever !  
The LORD shall rejoice in his works !
32. He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth ;  
He toucheth the hills and they smoke.

33. I will sing unto the **LORD**, as long as I live,  
I will sing praise to my **God**, while I have my  
being.

34. And so shall my words please **Him**,<sup>18</sup>  
I will be glad in the **LORD**.

35. As for sinners they shall be<sup>19</sup> consumed out of the  
earth ;  
And the wicked shall be<sup>20</sup> no more.  
Bless thou the **LORD**, O my soul.  
Praise the **LORD**.

**Critical References.**—1, lit. *covering*. 2, *His angels as winds—as a flaming fire*, Targum ; *out of the winds—out of the flaming fire*, Delitzsch. 3, Chaldee, Kay, Wordsworth's Commentary, Hengstenberg ; *the mountains ascend, the valleys descend*, Perowne, Delitzsch, Lange. 4, *they cannot swell over*, Kay. 5, *They cannot return*, Kay. 6, *rivers*, Prayer-Book Version ; *brooks*, Hupfield, Ewald ; *torrent-beds*, Perowne ; *ravines*, Kay. 7, *flow*, Perowne ; *wend their way*, Kay, Hitzig. 8, *over*, Kay. 9, lit. *give a voice, utter their notes*, Kay. 10, *the cultivation*, Hitzig ; *tillage*, Kay ; *husbandry*, Wordsworth's Commentary ; *for the use of man*, Perowne, Delitzsch, Hitzig, Speaker's Commentary. 11, *more than oil*, Version 1611, Margin, Lange ; *making the face brighter than oil*, Kay, Hengstenberg ; *while oil makes his face to shine*, Hupfield, Perowne. 12, *satisfied*, Perowne ; *satiated*, Kay. 13, *tillage*, Kay. 14, *yonder sea*, Delitzsch. 15, *to sport with him*, Kay. 16, *gasp*, Kay ; *expire*, Delitzsch. 17, *May the glory of the **LORD***, Kay ; *Let the glory*, Perowne, Delitzsch. 18, *May my words please **Him***, Perowne ; *be pleasant unto **Him***, Kay, Delitzsch. 19, *sinners shall be*, Kay, Perowne ; *Let sinners*, Delitzsch. 20, *the wicked shall be*, Perowne ; *are no more*, Kay.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 4, *Who maketh, &c.*, Heb. i. 7.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *O **LORD** my **God**, &c.*, the Psalmist claims the God of Creation, the “*Maker of heaven and earth*,” as his God, and proceeds to celebrate, not the greatness of Creation, but

of the Creator. He dwells upon the garments, the pavilion, the chariot, and the retinue of the Great King. 2, *like a curtain*, to form the canopy of His royal pavilion (1 Tim. vi. 16). 3, *in the waters*, those which, according to Jewish conceptions, "were above the firmament." The mystical interpreters apply the passage to Baptism; *the clouds*, as though the roll of his chariot-wheels was heard in the thunder; *his chariot* (Acts i. 9). 4, *Who maketh, &c.*, the interpretations of this verse fall into two groups, the one of which explains it as, "Who useth the elements as his agents, forming his messengers 'out of' the winds and the fire;" the other, as "Who permits his angels to employ the winds and the fire as instruments wherewith to carry out their missions, or to veil themselves, as it were, under the forms of the forces of Nature." The Targum explains it as "swift as the winds." The Son of God is "Begotten, not made" (Heb. i. 5-7). 6, *With the deep, &c.* (Gen. i. 2). 7, *They go up, &c.*, some Commentators understand these words to refer to the mountains and valleys, which, by their upheaval and depression, respectively ascend and descend to the positions appointed for them. Others consider them to apply to the ascent and descent of the waters until they finally reached their allotted place. 9, *That they turn, &c.*, a reference, perhaps, to the Deluge. 11, *They give drink, &c.*, and in so doing furnish an illustration of God's care for His creatures (S. Matt. vi. 26). 13, *He watereth, &c.*, by means of the showers which fall upon them. The rain is described as "the fruit of His works;" that is, as the result of the operations of God. 14, *for the service of man*, Commentators again explain diversely. Some con-

sider "service" to be equivalent to "for the use of man;" while others, relying upon the translation of the word in ver. 23 as "labour," and on its occurrence four times in the Book of Nehemiah in the sense of "tillage" (Neh. x. 37), regard it as referring to the cultivation of the soil as the appointed employment of man (Gen. ii. 15). 15, *And wine, &c.*, a difference of opinion exists also as to the rendering of this verse. Some Expositors regard the "wine," the "oil," and the "bread" as three separate gifts of "food out of the earth," bestowed by God, either unconditionally, or as the consequence of a due exercise of human labour. By the first view, "oil" is reckoned as one of the three chief nutritive products of the ground; the second would restrict the gifts to two, the bread and wine, the latter making the face to shine like oil. The use made of the passage by mystical interpreters as foreshadowing the Holy Eucharist is obvious. 16, *The trees of the LORD, &c.*, the magnificent trees of the forests, which owe nothing to human culture. 17, *Where the birds, &c.*, the great Architect of the Universe has implanted even in the birds a knowledge of how to construct their nests. The animal creation is provided not only with food but with shelter also. 18, *the wild goats*, probably the ibex is the animal intended; *conies*, the *hyrax Syriacus*, an animal resembling the marmot, having its holes in the rocks. 19, *the moon for seasons*, the moon is mentioned before the sun in accordance with the Jewish custom of reckoning the night before the day (Gen. i. 5). The time for the recurrence of the festivals was marked by the moon; *The sun, &c.*, a suggested rendering is, "He knoweth the going down of the sun." 20, *Thou makest darkness, &c.*,

even the night is a season of activity with the animal world, and the cry in it of the wild beasts is an asking of their food from God. 23, *Man goeth forth*, &c., the twelve hours of the day form the appointed season for his appointed labour. 24, *How manifold*, &c., the Psalmist breaks forth into the language of praise, the manifold forms of life are a portion of the Divine riches. 25, *This sea*, even the waters teem with life, and afford beside a field for the enterprise of man. 26, *Leviathan*, the Hebrew word is retained untranslated to indicate any kind of sea-monster. In some passages it appears to denote the crocodile, but in this instance some description of whale seems to be intended. The old map-makers, influenced possibly by this Psalm, were accustomed to place figures of animals in the blank spaces of unexplored countries, and a ship and a whale in the seas. 27, *All these*, &c., the Psalmist returns to the contemplation of the all-sustaining Providence of God. 29, *they die*, or "expire," the word is used in Gen. vi. 17. 30, *Thou sendest*, &c., the Rabbinical interpreters apply this passage to the Resurrection. 31, *The glory*, &c., the Psalmist's review of Creation is now concluded, and he ends the Psalm with a determination that as God rejoices in His works, so will he himself rejoice in God. 32, *He looketh*, &c., probably a reference to Sinai. If volcanoes are intended, the passage contains the only reference to them in Scripture. 35, *As for sinners*, &c., the Psalmist is led on to the contemplation of a new and more perfect creation, from which every thing which offendeth should be absent (Rev. xxi. 27). *Praise ye the LORD*, "Hallelujah" occurs here for the first time in the Psalter, and is the result of a consideration of the old Creation and of an anticipation of the New.

## PSALM CVIII.

*(ASCENSION-DAY, EVENSONG.)*

**The History.**—This Psalm is constructed out of portions of two others, both of which are ascribed to David. The portion comprising verses 1-5 corresponds with Psalm LVII., verses 8-12, while the remainder, verses 6-13, is taken from Psalm LX., verses 5-12. The union of these two portions into a new whole is generally supposed to have been the work of one of the returned exiles, and the Psalm as it stands in this place is assigned to the period of the Restoration.

**The Structure, &c.**—The first portion (verses 1-5) is a song of praise, to which (in verses 6-13) the further quotation is subjoined, expressive of confidence in Divine aid, and concluding with a prayer for still further help. The Psalm (which is not appointed for Ascension-Day in any of the ancient Uses) has probably been selected for that festival in the English Church in consequence of the applicability of verses 4-5, and of its general tone of triumph.

**The Inscription.**—As being wholly made up of David's words the Psalm is in one sense correctly styled a Song of David, notwithstanding its composite character, and its appearance in its present form, at a period long subsequent to the time of David.

## A Song or Psalm of David.

1. My heart is fixed, O God,  
I will sing and give praise, even with my glory.
2. Awake, psaltery and harp,  
I will awake early.<sup>1</sup>
3. I will praise Thee, O LORD, among the people,  
And I will sing praises unto Thee among the nations.
4. For great above the heavens is Thy mercy,  
And unto the clouds Thy truth [reacheth].
5. Be Thou exalted above the heavens, O God,  
And Thy glory above all the earth.
  
6. That Thy beloved may be delivered,  
Save with Thy right hand and answer me.
7. God hath spoken in His holiness : I will rejoice ;  
I will divide Sichem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.
8. Mine is Gilead, mine Manasseh,  
Ephraim also is the strength<sup>2</sup> of mine head ;  
Judah is my lawgiver.
9. Moab is my wash-pot,  
Over Edom will I cast out my shoe,  
Over Philistia will I triumph.
10. Who will bring me into the strong<sup>3</sup> city ?  
Who will lead me into Edom ?
11. Hast not Thou, O God, cast us off<sup>4</sup> ?  
And Thou wilt not, O God, go forth with our hosts ?
12. Give us help against the enemy<sup>5</sup> ;  
For vain is the help of man.
13. Through God we shall do valiantly,  
For He shall tread down our enemies.

**Critical References.**—1, *I will awake the morning dawn*, Perowne, Delitzsch; *by early dawn*, Kay. 2, *defence*, Kay, Perowne. 3, *entrenched*, Kay. 4, *Wilt not Thou O God, who hast ? &c.*, Hengstenberg; *Is it not Thou O God, who didn't ? &c.*, Kay; 5, *the adversary*, Kay, Perowne.

**New Testament References.**—No quotations from this Psalm occur in the New Testament.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *my glory*, my soul, or, according to some, my poetical faculty. 2, *psaltery*, the word here rendered “psaltery,” is in some other instances translated “viol,” and is probably the same instrument as the lute. It is supposed to have been a stringed instrument of the guitar description, of a somewhat triangular form; *early*, some Commentators would render this word adverbially, while others consider that the Psalmist expresses in poetical language his purpose of praising God even before sunrise, “when it was yet dark.” Mystical Expositors see a reference to the Resurrection “very early in the morning.” 4, *Thy truth*, this is made the ground of the prayer for help which follows. 7, *God hath spoken*, &c., a reference to the promised possession of the land (Gen. xv. 18, Ex. xxiii. 31, Deut. xi. 24). *I will divide Shechem*, &c., as a testimony of my undisputed possession and authority. Shechem was the place in which Abraham first pitched his tent (Gen. xii. 6), and to which Jacob came on his return from Padan-aram (Gen. xxxvii. 18). It was assigned to Ephraim at the division of the land (Josh. xx. 7), it re-appears in the New Testament as Sychar (S. Jno. iv. 5). Shechem (or Sichem) would seem to represent the country lying to the West, and Succoth that lying to the East of Jordan. 8, *Gilead*, this was the mountainous frontier-land eastward of Jordan;

*Manasseh*, after the conquest of Gilead by Manasseh one half of the tribe settled there, the other half crossing the Jordan and dwelling between it and the Mediterranean Sea. *Ephraim*, this tribe, whose portion was westward of Jordan and to the north of Manasseh, furnished David with a mighty host of warriors on the occasion of his being made king in Hebron (1 Chron. xii. 22, 23, 30). *Judah* (2 Sam. ii. 4). 9, *Moab*, &c., the conqueror on his return from battle uses Moab as a bath for his feet, while to Edom standing by as an attendant slave he casts his unloosened sandals; over *Philistia*, &c., Philistia (in Psalm lx.) is represented as uttering a cry of distress, which is replaced in this Psalm by the triumphant shout of the victor. 10, *the strong city*, probably an allusion to Petra.

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## PSALM CX.

(*CHRISTMAS-DAY, EVENSONG.*)

**The History.**—The question which was put by Our Lord to the Pharisees (S. Matt. xxii. 43, S. Mark xii. 36) was based upon two assumed facts: the one, that David was the writer of this Psalm; the other, that he wrote it under Divine Inspiration. The bringing up of the Ark to Zion, when the earthly throne of Jehovah was placed beside David, has been a date conjecturally suggested as the time of its composition, but the Psalm has not originated, as far as we can tell, from any circumstances in which David, or any other Jewish monarch, was ever placed.

It is, indeed, inapplicable to any mere man, and the Jewish Commentators, until the second century, unhesitatingly interpreted it of the Messiah. They subsequently ceased to do so on finding that such an exposition on their part supplied Christian controversialists with an unanswerable argument against them. David, in fact, does not appear to have alluded in this Psalm to any portion of his own personal history or experience, which could have received a typical application, but taught "by the Holy Ghost" has risen far above himself to depict the promised Messiah as both Priest and King.

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm opens with a declaration which the Psalmist, when in the Spirit, has been permitted to hear, vers. 1-2. He next describes the King as going forth to battle, surrounded by his host of youthful warriors, ver. 3. Another and further Revelation is then vouchsafed, by which the Messiah, already possessed of kingly authority, is invested with the Priestly Office, ver. 4. The success and progress of the Priest-King is next recounted, and concludes the Psalm, vers. 5-7. As Our Lord Himself quotes this Psalm as referring to the Son of David, it was fitly appropriated as one of the Vesper Psalms for Christmas-Day in the Gregorian and Ambrosian Uses.

**The Inscription.**—The Psalm is assigned by the Inscription to David as its author.

A Psalm of David.

1. The LORD said unto my Lord, "Sit Thou at my right hand,  
"Until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool."

2. The rod<sup>1</sup> of Thy strength shall the LORD send out of Zion;  
“Rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies.”
3. Thy people shall be willing<sup>2</sup> in the day of Thy power,  
In the beauties of holiness;<sup>3</sup>  
From the womb of the morning Thou hast the dew of Thy youth.<sup>4</sup>
4. The LORD hath sworn,—and will not repent,—  
“Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech.”
5. The Lord at Thy right hand  
Shall strike<sup>5</sup> through kings in the day of His wrath.
6. He shall judge among the heathen; he shall fill the places with dead bodies;<sup>6</sup>  
He shall wound the heads<sup>7</sup> over many countries.<sup>8</sup>
7. He shall drink in the way of the brook,<sup>9</sup>  
Therefore shall he lift up the<sup>10</sup> head.

**Critical References.**—1, Kay ; *sceptre*, Perowne, Delitzsch. 2, *Thy people are free-will offerings*, Kay ; *are free-will gifts*, Hengstenberg ; *offer themselves willingly*, Perowne. 3, *in holy vestments*, Perowne ; *attire*, Wordsworth's Commentary ; *in the splendours of holiness*, Kay ; 4, *young men*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch ; *from the womb before the Morning-star I begat Thee*, Septuagint, Vulgate ; *The dew of Thy birth is of the womb of the morning*, Prayer-Book Version. 5, *Has stricken*, Kay, Wordsworth's Commentary ; *crushed*, Perowne. 6, *full number takes He of bodies*, Kay ; 7, *lit. the head*. 8, *divers countries*, Prayer-Book Version ; *wide lands*, Perowne ; *the wide earth*, Kay, Hengstenberg. 9, *on His way, of the torrent*, Kay. 10, *His head*, Kay, Perowne.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 1, *The LORD, &c.*, Acts ii. 34, 1 Cor. xv. 25, Heb. i. 13. 4, *The LORD hath sworn, &c.*, Heb. v. 6, vii. 21.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *The LORD said, &c.*, David, “in spirit,” bears and records the address made by Jehovah to Messiah; *my Lord*, as being the head of humanity, the sovereign of whom David was himself a subject; *sit*, the word need not be regarded as emphatic except so far as it denotes position at the right hand, the place of honour (1 Kings ii. 19). Our Lord makes reference to this in Matt. xxvi. 64; (see also Rom. viii. 34, Eph. i. 20, Col. iii. 1); *Until*, the Mediatorial rule over the Church Militant will cease when its warfare shall have come to an end; *Thy footstool*, an allusion to the eastern token of entire subjugation (Josh. x. 24-25). 2, *The rod*, the word is the one used of the rod of Moses. The rod is either an instrument of punishment and destruction (Isa. ix. 4), or a sign of authority and majesty (Jer. xlvi. 17, Ezek. xix. 11); *out of Zion*, the preaching of the Kingdom was to begin at Jerusalem (S. Luke xxiv. 47); *Rule Thou, &c.*, the Kingly title was displayed upon the Cross. The Church is not taken out of the world, but preserved age after age in the midst of her enemies. The first member of this verse is generally regarded as being the assertion of the Psalmist himself, prefacing the Divine utterance recorded in the second member, but some Commentators consider that the declaration made by Jehovah extends through the whole of the first and second verses. 3, *Thy people, &c.*, the Psalmist notes their willingness and their attire, and subsequently their numbers. They dedicate themselves as free-will offerings to the king (Judges v. 2, 9) as warrior-priests, clad in sacerdotal vestments; *the dew of Thy youth*, Commentators, with a very general consent, interpret these words as a description of the King

going forth to battle, followed by a host of youthful warriors, countless as the drops of the dew, "a great multitude whom no man could number;" some would discover further allusions to the mysterious origin of the dew (Job xxxviii. 28) to its beauty and purity, and to its falling with a silent suddenness which man is powerless either to hinder or effect (S. Jno. i. 13). Others, however, apply the expression to Our Lord Himself, while the rendering of the Septuagint has an evident reference to the Eternal Generation of Him Who was "begotten, not made." 4, *The LORD hath sworn, &c.*, the Psalmist introduces with this assertion the very words of Jehovah, "Thou art a priest," &c., which form the solemn central announcement of the Psalm. The victorious King of His people must also be their Priest, ever living to make intercession for them, and confirmed in this office by an oath (Heb. vii. 21); *for ever*, the eternity of this Priesthood excludes the possibility of any application of the language to David, if even any union of the offices of Priest and King had ever been known in Israel; *Melchisedek*, the references to Melchisedek in Holy Scripture are widely separated. The first occurs in the Scripture narrative of Gen. xiv. 18, where Melchisedek is described as uniting in his own person the Kingly and Priestly offices, and as bringing forth bread and wine, an act which some have suggested was the preparation of a feast upon a previously offered sacrifice of an unbloody character. The next mention of Melchisedek is the one occurring in this Psalm, and the last in the quotations from it in the Epistle to the Hebrews, made with the purpose of proving that the setting aside of the Levitical priesthood formed a part of the Divine purpose

which had been long foretold. The most prominent characteristics of Melchisedek are, that he was both a King and a Priest, that he did not fill the latter office by virtue of a descent from Levi, and that a mystery surrounded both his "beginning of days" and "end of life." 5, *The Lord at Thy right hand, &c.*, some of the ancient Expositors regard these words as the opening of an address which is made by the Psalmist to Jehovah, as though he had said, "The King Messiah Who has been seated hitherto by Thy command at Thy right-hand shall now, in the day of His power and wrath, strike through kings." Others, especially the Greek Commentators, together with some modern ones, consider that the Psalmist in the fifth and sixth verses is addressing the Messiah, "Jehovah shall descend from His throne, and, placing Himself at Thy right-hand in the battle, shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath." Those who prefer this interpretation necessarily see in the seventh verse a narration only by the Psalmist of the consequent victorious progress of Messiah; *shall strike*, or, "has stricken," the victory is spoken of as though it were already secured. The conquests of Christ and of His Church shall be world-wide. 6, *He shall fill, &c.*, a rendering proposed is, "full number takes He of bodies," should this be adopted the sense would be, that when the King has set His Judgment-Throne, he will claim even the bodies of those whom the Enemy had enslaved (S. Jno. vi. 39); *the heads*, rather, "the head" (Gen. iii. 15). The old Expositors interpret the passage as, "him that was head over many countries" (S. Matt. iv. 8); "Kings" had been stricken before, now it is Satan, the great Adversary

who shall be overcome. 7, *Of the brook, &c.*, all early comment explains this passage as predictive of Christ's humiliation, under the figure of the lowly drinking of a brook on His path of suffering, followed indeed by a glorious exaltation. Modern Interpreters point out that the drinking "of the brook" was a refreshing draught, and see in the words a picture of the victorious leader halting only for a moment in his pursuit of the flying enemy to take, as he hastens on his way, a draught from the rushing torrent, and then pressing on to his final triumph.

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## PSALM CXI.

(*EASTER-DAY, MATTINS.*)

**The History.**—The contents of this Psalm supply no clue to the writer, nor to the precise circumstances under which it was composed. The form, however, into which it is cast indicates that it is one of the later Psalms, written probably after the return from the Exile.

**The Structure, &c.**—This Psalm is one of the nine which are called "Alphabetical." These Psalms are composed in accordance with certain fixed rules, and are more or less artificial in their construction. In the simplest form employed it will be found in the Original that the initial letters of the consecutive verses follow the order of the Hebrew Alphabet, the first verse beginning with the first letter, the second

with the second, and that this rule is observed to the close. In Psalm CXIX. this arrangement is carried out still further, and each eight consecutive verses begin with the same letter, the letters being allotted to equal groups of verses. In the present Psalm the initial letter of a verse is repeated in each of its clauses. It consists for the most part of couplets (though triplets are not excluded). It is one of the ten Psalms which begin with "Hallelujah." References will be found in it to the Deliverance of the people out of Egypt, to their support in the Wilderness, and to their settlement in Canaan, while it commemorates the unchangeableness of the Covenant which God had made with His people. Though it forms no part of the "Hallel," it has been conjectured that it was sung at the Paschal Feast. This Psalm was one of those selected for Sunday in the Gregorian Use; the English Church employs it on Easter-Day, as pre-eminently the Lord's Day. The Redemption of Israel, which is its theme, may be regarded as typical of the "redemption of the purchased possession" (Eph. i. 14), and of "the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. viii. 23), the pledge of which is the "bringing again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ—through the blood of the everlasting Covenant" (Heb. xiii. 20).

**The Inscription.**—The Psalm is anonymous. See on the Inscription to Psalm II.

1. **Praise ye the LORD.**

I will praise the LORD with my whole heart,  
In the assembly of the upright and in the con-  
gregation.

2. Great are the works of the **LORD**,  
Sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.
3. Honourable and glorious is His work,  
And His righteousness endureth for ever.
4. He hath made His wonderful works to be remem-  
bered;<sup>1</sup>  
Gracious, and full of compassion is the **LORD**.
5. He hath given meat<sup>2</sup> unto them that fear Him ;  
He will ever be mindful of His Covenant.
6. He hath shewed His people the power of His  
works,  
That He may give them<sup>3</sup> the heritage of the  
heathen.
7. The works of His hands are verity and judge-  
ment ;  
Sure, are all His commandments ;
8. They stand fast for ever,  
Done in truth and uprightness.
9. He sent redemption unto His people ;  
He hath commanded His Covenant for ever ;  
Holy and reverend<sup>4</sup> is His name.
10. The fear of the **LORD** is the beginning<sup>5</sup> of  
wisdom ;  
A good understanding have all they that do  
them ;—  
His praise endureth for ever.

**Critical References.**—1, *He hath appointed a memorial  
for His wondrous deeds*, Septuagint, Vulgate, Kay, Perowne.  
2, *food*, Perowne ; *viand*, Kay. 3, *giving them*, *d.c.*, Kay, Perowne.  
4, *awful*, Kay, Perowne. 5, Perowne, Delitzsch ;  
*choicest*, Kay.

**New Testament References.**—This Psalm is not  
quoted in the New Testament.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *Praise ye the Lord*, this “Hallelujah” stands at the head of the Psalm as its key-note, and forms no portion of the alphabetical arrangement which follows. *In the assembly*, the meeting together of those who feared the Lord and “spake often one to another,” as distinguished from the gatherings of the congregation for public worship. 2, *Sought out*, the true student, either of Nature or of Revelation, takes pleasure in the subject of his study. 4, *He hath made, &c.*, rather, “He hath appointed a memorial for His wondrous deeds,” the word “memorial” being the same as that employed in Ex. xii. 14, and xiii. 9, and there applied to the Passover. 5, *meat*, this word at the period of the Version of 1611 was used in a wider sense for food of every description. The word in the Original seems to be connected with the meaning of “prey” or “spoil,” and some Commentators have in consequence explained it of the spoil taken from the Egyptians, but it is more generally considered to allude to the Paschal Lamb, or, according to some, to the Manna. *He will ever, &c.*, as He was mindful of His Covenant in the past, so will He ever continue to be (S. Luke xxii. 19, 20). 6, *the power, &c.*, Christ was “declared to be the Son of God with power—by the resurrection from the dead” (Rom. i. 4); *That He may give, &c.*, the reference is to the Israelites being put into the possession of Canaan. 7, *verity and judgement*, a mystical exposition of this verse sees in the “verity” the spiritual food which is “verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful;” and in the “judgement,” the condemnation of those who “receive the same unworthily.” 8, *They stand fast*, it is the “commandments” which have immediately

preceded, though it has been suggested that the "works" are the subject of the assertion. His Commandments are unlike human laws in that they can never be repealed. Our Lord's command "to continue a perpetual memory of that His precious death" is binding until His coming again. 9, *He sent redemption, &c.*, the "redemption" was the deliverance from Egypt, the "covenant" was that made at Sinai. The inviolability of the Covenant is pledged by the Divine Name, which is the manifestation of the Divine Nature (S. Luke i. 49). 10, *The fear of the LORD, &c.*, the reverential, godly, and child-like fear (Prov. i. 7, ix. 10, Job xxviii. 28); *wisdom*, the natural man may think this wisdom folly (Mal. iii. 14, 15), "the spirit of wisdom" is the power to make an application of general principles to particular cases; "the spirit of understanding" is the power of spiritual discernment (Isa. xi. 2, 3); *do them*, the knowledge is experimental (S. John vii. 17); *His praise, &c.*, the praise, or praising, of God is everlasting, "To Thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth."

## PSALM CXIII.

(*EASTER-DAY, EVENSONG.*)

**The History.**—This Psalm, the work of an unknown writer, was probably composed at the time of the Return from the Captivity. It is the first Psalm in the group known as the *Hallel*, which comprised Psalms CXIII.-CXVIII. These Psalms

were sung at the three great Feasts, at the Feast of Dedication, and at the New Moons. At the Passover this Psalm, together with Psalm CXIV., was sung before the partaking of the Second Cup, and the remaining Psalms, CXV.-CXVIII., after the meal was ended (S. Matt. xxvi. 30).

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm consists of Three Stanzas. In the *First* (vers. 1-3), the servants of Jehovah are exhorted to praise His Name. In the *Second* (vers. 4-6), His Glory is described, and a transition is made to the *Third* (vers. 7-9), which is a declaration of His Condescension. It was one of the Sunday Psalms in both the Gregorian and Ambrosian Uses. Its appropriation to the Easter Festival is probably owing to its Jewish Paschal Use.

**The Inscription.**—The Psalm is anonymous. See on Ps. II.

1. Hallelujah.  
Praise, O ye servants of the LORD,  
Praise the Name of the LORD.
2. The Name of the LORD be blessed  
From this time forth and for evermore.
3. From the rising of the sun unto the going down  
of the same  
Is the LORD'S Name to be praised.
4. High above all nations is the LORD,  
And His glory above the heavens.
5. Who is like unto the LORD our God,  
Who hath His dwelling so high,<sup>1</sup>
6. Who humbleth Himself to behold  
The things [that are] in heaven and in the earth !

7. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust;  
And out of the dung-hill lifteth up the needy,
8. That He may set him with princes,  
With the princes of His people.
9. He maketh the barren woman to dwell in an  
house  
A joyful mother of children.  
Hallelujah.

**Critical References.**—1, lit. *maketh high to sit*; *sits enthroned*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch.

**New Testament References.**—The Psalm is not quoted in the New Testament.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *O ye servants, &c.*, the expression is not to be confined to the Levites, but is applied to the whole nation (Lev. xxv. 55). 2, *evermore*, cause for praise shall never be wanting. 3, *From the rising, &c.*, from East to West, “at all times and in all places.” Under the Old Dispensation God chose a place “to cause His Name to dwell there” (Deut. xii. 11), in the New, the “Name” was to be spread over all nations by the “Holy Church throughout all the world” (1 Cor. i. 2). 5, *Who hath His dwelling, &c.* (Isa. lvii. 15, S. Luke xii. 6, i. 48-52). 7, *He raiseth, &c.* (1 Sam. ii. 8, Ps. xxii. 15, Isa. xxvi. 19), human nature has been exalted from the grave, by Him, Who for our sakes became poor, to “the right hand of the Father, God Almighty.” 9, *the barren woman*, the wife, but not the mother, such were Sarah, Rachel, Manoah’s wife, Hannah, and in the New Testament, Elizabeth. A type of the Gentile Church (Isa. liv. 1, Gal. iv. 27); *in an house, &c.*, this should rather be “in the house, a joyful mother of the children,” as though the whole domestic scene was present before the eyes of the Psalmist.

## PSALM CXIV.

*(EASTER-DAY, EVENSONG.)*

**The History.**—The date and writer of this Psalm are both unknown. The most probable conjecture is that it was composed after the Return from the Exile. This second Exodus from Babylon impressed the writer with a sense of the greatness of the miracles which were connected with the Exodus from Egypt.

**The Structure, &c.**—This Psalm is one of the most perfect examples of careful parallelism. It consists of Four Stanzas contained in verses 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, and 7-8. Each stanza is made up of two verses, and each verse of two lines, having a close verbal resemblance to each other. It recounts the miracles wrought on behalf of Israel both at the departure out of Egypt, and at the entrance into the Land of Promise. It was used as a festival-psalm on the eighth day of the Passover. In the Gregorian Use it is one of the Sunday Psalms and is now specially appropriated to Easter-Day. The redemption of Israel is regarded as typical of deliverance from a spiritual bondage, and of the ransom “from the power of the grave.”

**The Inscription.**—The Psalm is an anonymous one. See on Ps. II.

1. When Israel went out of Egypt,  
The house of Jacob from a people of a strange  
language;

2. Judah was<sup>1</sup> His Sanctuary,  
Israel His dominion.
3. The sea saw and fled,  
Jordan was driven back.
4. The mountains skipped like rams,  
The little hills like young sheep.
5. What aileth<sup>2</sup> thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest ?  
Thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back ?
6. Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams ?  
Ye little hills like young sheep ?
7. At the presence of the Lord tremble,<sup>3</sup> thou earth,  
At the presence of the God of Jacob ;
8. Who turned the rock into a standing water,  
The flint into a fountain of waters.

**Critical References.**—1, *became*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 2, *ails*, Kay. 3, *be in pangs*, Kay.

**New Testament References.**—No quotations from this Psalm are found in the New Testament.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *went out of Egypt*, the Exodus was the beginning of the national life, as the Return from Babylon was its restoration. The expression comprises all that occurred between the Israelites leaving Egypt and entering into Canaan; *of a strange language* (Deut. xxviii. 49, Isa. xxxiii. 19). The object of Israel's redemption was that they might become "a kingdom of priests and an holy nation" (Ex. xix. 3-6), "figuring thereby" the redemption of our nature. 2, *Judah*, &c., the por-

tion of the nation which was restored became the representative of the whole. The Sanctuary was set up at Jerusalem (Ex. xv. 17); *Israel*, the use of the two names has been considered to indicate that the Psalm is at least of later date than the time of Rehoboam (1 Kings xii. 16), but they were used together at an earlier period (2 Sam. xix. 41-3, xxiv. 1). *Israel*, however, was regarded as the national name (Ex. iii. 16). For a time it was appropriated as the distinctive name of the Northern Kingdom, but the restored exiles employed it as the national designation (Neh. vii. 73, ix. 1). *His dominion*, the effect is heightened by the withholding of the Name of God until the close of the Psalm. 3, *the sea, &c.*, these verses unite events which severally occurred at the outset and the close of the journey to Canaan, and which were historically separated by an interval of forty years. The great Deliverance is regarded as a whole. 4, *The mountains, &c.* (Ex. xix. 18). 5, *What aileth, &c.*, the Psalmist, with dramatic force, realises the scene, and then questions the parted floods and quaking mountains. 8, *Who turned, &c.*, the miracles at Horeb (Ex. xvii. 6) and at Kadesh (Num. xx. 11, Deut. viii. 15) are referred to together. The thought in the Psalmist's mind appears to be that He who had wrought these miracles in the past would ever be present with His people.

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## PSALM CXVIII.

*(EASTER-DAY, EVENSONG.)*

**The History.**—This Psalm has been supposed by some to have been composed by David when he was anointed in Hebron after the death of Ish-bosheth (2 Sam. v. 1-4). Others refer it to the observance of some national festival in the time of Hezekiah (2 Chron. xxix. 25-30, xxx. 21), but a great preponderance of opinion has assigned it to the period of the Restoration, and several possible occasions for its composition or use have each their advocates. The most probable one, according to some Commentators, was the first keeping of the Feast of Tabernacles after the Return (Ezra iii. 4). The fifteenth verse of the Psalm is referred to in support of this view. Others are strongly in favour of connecting it with the laying of the Foundation of the Second Temple (Ezra iii. 10, 11), relying upon the verbal similarity of the expressions in the historical account with those in the early verses of the Psalm and on its twenty-second verse. This latter verse, however, is considered by many to point rather to the completion, than to the commencement, of the Temple, and they consequently select the Passover held after the Dedication of the House of God as the date of the composition of the Psalm (Ezra vi. 16-22), the twenty-seventh verse of the Psalm being held to be an allusion to the sacrifices then offered. The general language of the Psalm has also been thought appropriate to the circumstances in which Nehemiah was placed, and one conjecture would refer the date of the Psalm to the keeping of the Feast of Tabernacles in his days (Neh. viii. 16-18).

**The Structure, &c.**—Various modes of dividing this Psalm and of arranging it in stanzas have been proposed, but it may be said of all of them that they are more or less arbitrary and conjectural. Some would discover in the Psalm the use of choral, antiphonal, and even of solo singing. According to this view a processional hymn closes at the nineteenth verse, a single voice from within responds with the twentieth, and a chorus of priests and Levites, also within, reply to the strain of praise of those without, who had halted at the gate while waiting for admission; lastly, both bodies unite in the two closing verses in a final Doxology. The Psalm has been appropriated to Easter-Day from a very early date. As the closing Psalm of the *Hallel*, it probably was sung by Our Lord and His disciples before they left the “upper-room” for Gethsemane (S. Matt. xxvi. 30).

**The Inscription.**—The Psalm is an anonymous one. See on Ps. II.

1. “O give thanks unto the LORD, for He is good;  
“Because His mercy endureth for ever.”
2. Let Israel now say,—  
“That His mercy endureth for ever.”
3. Let the house of Aaron now say,  
“That His mercy endureth for ever.”
4. Let them now that fear the LORD say,  
“That His mercy endureth for ever.”
5. Out of distress<sup>1</sup> I called upon the LORD;  
The LORD answered me in a large place.<sup>2</sup>
6. The LORD is on my side; I will not fear;  
What can man do unto me?

7. The LORD taketh my part with them that help me;  
Therefore shall I see<sup>3</sup> [my desire] upon mine enemies.
8. Better is it to trust<sup>4</sup> in the LORD  
Than to put confidence in man :
9. Better is it to trust in the LORD  
Than to put confidence in princes.
10. All nations compassed me about ;  
But in the Name of the LORD will I cut them off.
11. They compassed me about, yea, they compassed me about ;  
But in the Name of the LORD will I cut them off.
12. They compassed me about like bees ;  
They are quenched as the fire of thorns ;  
For in the Name of the LORD will I cut them down.
13. Sore didst thou thrust at me, that I might fall ;  
But the LORD helped me.
  
14. “The LORD is my strength and my song,  
“And is become my salvation.”
15. The voice of joy and salvation is in the tabernacles<sup>5</sup> of the righteous,  
The right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.
16. The right hand of the LORD is exalted,  
The right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.
17. I shall not die, but live  
And declare the works of the LORD.
18. Sore bath the LORD chastened me,  
But He hath not given me over unto death.
19. Open to me the gates of righteousness,  
I will go into them ; I will praise the LORD.

20. This is the gate of the LORD;<sup>6</sup>  
Into it shall the righteous enter.

21. I will praise Thee, for Thou hast heard me  
And art become my salvation.

22. The stone [which] the builders refused<sup>7</sup>  
Is become the head [stone] of the corner.

23. From the LORD is this;<sup>8</sup>  
Marvellous is it in our eyes.

24. This is the day [which] the LORD hath made;  
We will<sup>9</sup> rejoice and be glad in it.

25. I beseech Thee, O LORD, save now;  
I beseech Thee, O LORD, send, now, prosperity.

26. Blessed be he that cometh in the Name of the  
LORD;  
We have blessed you out of the house of the LORD.

27. The LORD is God Who hath shewed us light;  
Bind the sacrifice<sup>10</sup> with cords  
Unto<sup>11</sup> the horns of the altar.

28. My God art Thou, and I will praise Thee,  
My God, I will exalt Thee.

29. O give thanks unto the LORD, for He is good,  
For His mercy endureth for ever.

**Critical References.**—1, *Out of the strait pass*, Kay; *out of straitness*, Perowne, Delitzsch. 2, *on the open plain*, Kay; *broad plain*, Delitzsch; *large place*, Perowne. 3, *And I shall look down—even I—on my foes*, Kay. 4, *to take refuge*, Kay, Perowne. 5, *tents*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 6, *This gate belongs to the LORD*, Kay; *This is the gate of Jehovah*, Perowne, Delitzsch. 7, *rejected*, Kay, Perowne. 8, lit., *From with the LORD is this*; *From the LORD did this issue come*, Kay; *This is Jehovah's doing*, Perowne. 9, *Let us*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 10, *feast day*, Septuagint, Vulgate, Wordsworth's *Commentary*. 11, *up to*, Kay; *until*, Hupfield.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 6, *The LORD, &c.*, Heb. xiii. 6. 22, *The stone, &c.*, S. Matt. xxi. 42, Acts iv. 11, 1 Pet. ii. 7.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 5, *Out of distress*, rather, “out of the strait pass.” The image is taken, either from the passing out of a narrow gorge or defile into a wide plain beyond, or, from the passing through narrow streets into an open square. The narrow place represented their captivity, the wide plain the deliverance which was the answer to their cry; *I called*, Israel is personified. 7, *The LORD, &c.*, He employs as His instruments “those that help me;” *Therefore shall I see*, I shall look down, in conscious security, upon my foes. Perhaps an allusion to the enmity of the Samaritans and others (Ezra iv. 4). 9, *in princes*, twenty years elapsed before the edict of Cyrus for the rebuilding of the Temple (2 Chron. xxxvi. 22-23, Ezra vi. 1-5) was carried into effect. The work was hindered under Cambyses, called Ahasuerus (Ezra iv. 6), was stopped under the Magian usurper, the Pseudo-Smerdis, called Artaxerxes (Ezra iv. 7-8, 17-24), and was not recommenced until the reign of Darius Hystaspes (Ezra vi. 8-12). 10, *All nations, &c.* (Ezra iv. 10). The mystical exposition interprets this of Herod, Pilate, and the Roman soldiery; *compassed me about*, the fourfold repetition marks the universality and pertinacity of the persecution; *in the Name of the LORD*, by His aid and power (1 Sam. xvii. 45). 12, *like bees*, so numerous were they; *as the fire of thorns*, their hostility was put down as suddenly as the blazing of a fire of thorns becomes extinct. 13, *Sore didst thou*, the enemies of Israel are addressed as if personified in an individual (S. Luke iv. 28-29). 14, *The LORD, &c.*

(Ex. xv. 6). 15, *the tabernacles of the righteous*, some Commentators see here a special allusion to the booths set up at the Feast of Tabernacles, others point out that a large number of the returned exiles would probably for a time dwell in tents; *The right hand, &c.*, the threefold repetition which follows may itself have formed the strain of joy and salvation. 17, *I shall not die, &c.*, the whole nation speaking as one man expresses its confident assurance of its renewed existence. It is the triumphant song both of the individual and of the Church (1 Cor. xv. 57). 18, *The LORD, &c.* (2 Cor. iv. 8-11). 19, *Open to me, &c.* either a personal expression of readiness to go up to the house of God (Isa. xxxviii. 19-22), or the words of the spokesman of the advancing procession which had now reached the gates of the Temple-enclosure; *of righteousness*, because righteousness was required in the worshippers who entered by them. 20, *This is the gate, &c.*, a warning voice from within reminds the waiting multitude of the holiness attached to the House of God and which it demanded (1 Chron. xvi. 29). 21, *And art become, &c.* (S. Jno. i. 14, 1 Cor. i. 30). "Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man;—Man of the Substance of His Mother, born in the world." 22, *The stone, &c.*, an allusion would seem to be made to some unrecorded historical occurrence. Tradition indeed relates that a stone which the builders of the Second Temple at first rejected was afterwards found to fit exactly as the "head of the corner." The memory of such a circumstance may easily have been handed down in the form of a proverbial expression. Primarily, Israel, despised by her heathen conquerors, and by the nations which surrounded her, became the "head of the

corner," occupying the place of pre-eminence as the people of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came. He Himself, rejected by the "builders," the Chief Priests and Pharisees, and by the Jewish people (Acts iv. 11), became the Corner-stone of the new spiritual temple (Eph. iii. 20). As the Corner-stone He unites the two Natures of God and Man in One Christ; He is the theme of the Two Testaments; He binds Jew and Gentile into One Holy Catholic Church. In Him, His saints in the Church Militant to whom "to live is Christ," and those at rest who have departed to be with Him, form One Communion. 23, *From the LORD, &c.*, this restoration from exile, and this re-building of the Temple. The whole plan of Redemption (1 Cor. i. 23-24). 24, *This is the day, &c.*, either, this whole period of our national restoration is the work of the LORD, or, this Festival-Day (which that Restoration has made it possible to hold) is His doing. From early times these words have been applied by the Christian Church to Easter-Day. 25, *Save now*, "Save we pray," the cry of the multitude, retained untranslated as *Hosanna* in S. Matt. xxi. 9, S. Mark xi. 9-10, S. Jno. xii. 13. During the recitation of this Psalm at the Feast of Tabernacles the people, at certain passages, waved their palm-branches and shouted either *Hallelujah*, or *Hosanna*; *now*, is an intensive particle added to give force to the entreaty, and has no reference in this place to time. 26, *Blessed, &c.*, this is a form of priestly benediction bestowed by the Priests and Levites as they stood on the threshold of the Temple upon those outside its gates, "Blessed, in the Name of the LORD, is he that cometh" (S. Matt. xxiii. 39). 27, *light*, some Commentators

see an allusion to "The **LORD** make His face shine upon thee" (Num. vi. 25), but others look upon it as a triumphal reminiscence of the march out of Egypt when the Israelites were guided by the pillar of fire (Ex. xiii. 21). *Bind, &c.*, various explanations have been given of this passage, which for the most part agree in one point, that of not understanding it as a command to bind to the horns of the altar the animal about to be sacrificed. Neither injunction nor record of such a practice is to be found. The "horns" of the altar of burnt-offering (Ex. xxvii. 1, 2) were four projections, one at each corner, made like the altar itself of acacia wood and overlaid with brass. On certain occasions they were to be sprinkled with the blood of the victim (Ex. xxix. 12, Lev. iv. 7). Some Commentators, from the Chaldee Targum downwards, interpret the passage as meaning "bind your sacrifice with cords, and so lead it to the altar;" others, "bind your sacrifice with cords until the time when it shall be offered upon the altar;" others again, "let your sacrifices, bound with cords in readiness, be so numerous that the animals shall fill the temple court even up to the horns of the altar." Another widely different exposition (which partly relies upon the Septuagint Version) would render "sacrifice" by "feast-day," and regards the passage as an injunction not to allow their festival to degenerate into a mere worldly rejoicing, but to connect it with religious ritual, and so bind the day to the horns of the altar." Yet another explanation translates "bind" by "deck," and "cords" by "boughs," making the whole to mean "deck your Feast (probably of Tabernacles) with boughs and wreaths even up to the altar. The renderings, how-

ever, “deck” and “boughs” are wholly unsupported. 28, *My God, &c.*, the language of personal feeling which pervades the whole Psalm again recurs, and the Psalm closes with the confession and resolve of the faithful soul putting its entire trust in a Personal Being of whom it can say “My God” (Ex. xv. 2, S. John xx. 28, Philipp. iii. 8).

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## PSALM CXXX.

(ASH-WEDNESDAY, EVENSONG.)

**The History.**—This Psalm is probably of late date, and of the period of the Captivity and Restoration.

**The Structure, &c.**—The First Division of this Psalm, verses 1-2, is a cry uttered out of great distress, an appeal to God to exercise that forgiveness which the Psalmist in the Second Part, verses 3-4, asserts to be a property of the Divine Nature. The Third Part, verses 5-6, is his expression of his longing waiting for the LORD, and the Concluding Portion, verses 7-8, is an exhortation to Israel to trust in Him with whom is not only forgiveness but plenteous redemption. The character of this, the sixth of the Penitential Psalms, has led to its special selection for Ash-Wednesday. It was, however, in the Sarum Use appropriated to Christmas-Day, possibly from a connection of the eighth verse with the birth of Him who was to “save His people from their sins” (S. Matt. i. 21), and with the tender mercy of God in visiting and redeeming His people (S. Luke i. 68, 77, 78).

**The Inscription.**—The title “A Song of Degrees,” or, of Ascents, is prefixed to fifteen Psalms, of which this is one. Its meaning is much disputed. Some consider it to refer to the rhythmical structure, by which a verse frequently begins with a repetition of the word which had closed the preceding one. This peculiarity, however, is absent in some of the Psalms styled “Songs of Degrees,” while it is found in others which have not that title. Another supposition is that these Psalms were sung, one after another, on the fifteen steps which led up from the court of the women to that of the men. One conjectural explanation would connect the name with the musical “scale,” to which the melody belonged. The most general opinion is that they were songs composed by the returning Exiles during their going up, or “ascent,” from Babylon to Jerusalem, and that they were used in after years by those who went up to Jerusalem to keep the Festivals, and who possibly added compositions of their own to the collection.

A Song of degrees.

1. Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O LORD,
2. Lord, hear my voice ;  
Let Thine ears be attentive  
To the voice of my supplications.
  
3. If Thou shouldst mark<sup>1</sup> iniquities O Lord,  
Lord, who shall stand ?
4. But with Thee is forgiveness,<sup>2</sup>  
That Thou mayest be feared.
5. I wait<sup>3</sup> for the LORD ; my soul doth wait ;  
And in His word do I hope.

6. My soul waiteth for<sup>4</sup> the Lord,  
More than they that watch<sup>5</sup> for the morning, they  
that watch for the morning.
7. O Israel hope in the LORD !  
For with the LORD is mercy,  
And with Him is plenteous redemption.
8. And HE shall redeem Israel  
From all his iniquities.

**Critical References.**—1, *watch for*, ver. 6 ; 2, lit. *the forgiveness* ; *propitiation*, Septuagint, Vulgate. 3, *waited*, Kay ; *have waited*, Perowne. 4, lit. *is unto* *LORD*. 5, *sentries*, Kay ; *watchers*, Perowne.

**New Testament References.**—The Psalm is not quoted in the New Testament.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *Out of the depths*, this is the usual image of trouble ; the cry is uttered out of the depths of the Captivity in Babylon, and has regard to the advent of a Deliverer, the promised Messiah, Who should “redeem Israel ;” *have I cried*, long, and ceaselessly. 3, *If Thou shouldest mark*, &c., if Thou shouldest keep a strict watch upon offences who should be able to stand in the judgement, or, who could bear the burden of punishment ? (Mal. iii. 2). 4, *But with Thee*, &c., offences, though marked, yet are marked with a view to their forgiveness. It is this possibility of forgiveness which prevents men from being “thrust either into desperation” or into a recklessness “no less perilous than desperation ;” *fearred*, the fear which follows upon forgiveness is the childlike fear of a forgiving father. 5, *And in His word*, in His promises. 6, *More than they that watch*, &c., emphasis is added to the words by their

repetition. Possibly the watchers on the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. iv. 9, vii. 3) suggested the expression. The "morning watch" (Ex. xiv. 24) lasted from two a.m. to sunrise. The watching, either of the sick (Is. xxxviii. 13) or of the sentry, may be intended. 7, *Let Israel, &c.*, the exhortation to Israel is based upon the Psalmist's own personal experience. *For with the LORD, in His counsels; plenteous*, "a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." 8, *And HE shall redeem*, He only can, and He will redeem; *Israel*, both the spiritual and the literal Israel (Rom. xi. 25-27); *from, &c.*, the Redemption shall be not only from their punishment, but from their power.

## PSALM CXXXII.

(CHRISTMAS-DAY, EVENSONG.)

**The History.**—The ancient Commentators connect the composition of this Psalm with the placing of the Ark by David in the Tabernacle which he had pitched for it (1 Chron. xv. 13, xvi. 1-2). Another opinion is that it owes its origin to the Dedication of Solomon's Temple (2 Chron. v. 7, vi. 41). Others, however, consider it to be the work of one of the Exiles, either whilst in Babylon, or subsequently to the Return. According to this view the writer, after recalling to mind the humiliation which had fallen on David's house, narrates his zeal, and pleads for the fulfilment of the Covenant made with him.

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm consists of four stanzas. The *First*, verses 1-5, pleads, according to one method of interpretation, the abasement of the House of David in the Captivity; according to another, dwells upon the anxiety which David personally underwent both in the search for the Ark and in preparing for it, when found, a suitable habitation. The *Second*, verses 6-10, is partly a narrative, and partly a petition. The *Third*, verses 11-13, calls to mind the promise made to David with regard to his seed. The *Fourth* stanza, verses 14-18, dwells more especially on the promise that the crown of the Anointed One should flourish. The Psalm is appropriated to Christmas-Day in the Gregorian Use, as the day on which “a horn of salvation” was raised up in the House of David.

**The Inscription.**—“A Song of Degrees.” See on Psalm CXXX.

A Song of Degrees.

1. LORD, remember David  
All his trouble.<sup>1</sup>
2. How he sware unto the LORD,  
And vowed unto the Mighty [God] of Jacob :
3. “Surely I will not come into the tabernacle<sup>2</sup> of  
my house,  
“Nor go up into my bed;<sup>3</sup>
4. “I will not give sleep to mine eyes  
“Or slumber to mine eyelids ;—
5. “Until I find out a place for the LORD,  
“Habitations for the Mighty [God] of Jacob.”
6. Lo, we heard of it at Epratah,  
We found it in the fields of the wood.

7. We will go<sup>4</sup> into His tabernacle,  
We will worship at His footstool.
8. Arise, O LORD, into Thy rest,  
Thou and the ark of Thy strength :
9. Let Thy priests be clothed with righteousness,  
And let Thy saints shout for joy :
10. For Thy servant David's sake ;—  
Turn not away the face of Thine Anointed.
11. The LORD hath sworn unto David in truth ;  
He will not turn from it ;  
“Of the fruit of thy body  
“Will I set upon thy throne.
12. “If thy children will keep My covenant  
“And My testimony that I shall teach them,  
“Their children also for evermore  
“Shall sit upon thy throne.”
13. For the LORD hath chosen Zion,  
He hath desired it for His habitation.
14. “This is My rest for ever,  
“Here will I dwell, for I have desired it.
15. “Her provision I will bless abundantly,  
“Her poor I will satisfy with bread.
16. “Her priests also will I clothe with salvation,  
“And her saints shall shout aloud for joy.
17. “There will I make the horn of David to bud,  
“I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed.
18. “His enemies will I clothe with shame,  
“But upon himself shall his crown flourish.”

**Critical References.**—1, *gentleness*, Septuagint, Vulgate; *abasement*, Kay; *anxious care*, Perowne; *trouble*, Delitzsch, Prayer Book Version. 2, *tent*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 3, *couch of my bed*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 4; *Let us go*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch. 18, lit. *blossom*.

**New Testament References.**—Ver. 11, *The LORD*,  
, Acts ii. 30.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *LORD, remember*  
*avid, &c.*, the language of Solomon (2 Chron. vi.) was “remember the mercies of David,” the mercies, that is, which were promised to him. Here, a altered language is used either of David’s anxiety with regard to the Ark, or of the afflictions which had fallen on his house. All this had was besought to remember to David. David had prepared the “pattern” of everything connected with the Temple, not only its architectural sign, but the pattern of “all the vessels of service in the House of the Lord” (1 Chron. xxviii. 11-19). Solomon carried out the designs with which he had been furnished (2 Chron. iii. 3). 2, *How he sware*, this vow is not recorded in the historical books; *Mighty, &c.* (Gen. xl ix. 24, Isa. i. 24, xl ix. 26, 16). 3, *tabernacle*, the desert-life had left its traces in the language, and the house was still the tent.” 4, *Or slumber, &c.*, the Septuagint (followed the Vulgate and the Prayer-Book Version) adds, “or rest to the temple of my head.” 5, *Habitations, &c.* (Haggai i. 4.) 6, *Lo, we heard of it, &c.*, interpretations of this passage are numerous and differing. Almost each word has been made the object of comment, and has been regarded as the key to the meaning. “We” has been explained as being the language of the people generally: “we” heard of the Ark when we ourselves were at Ephratah; and has been, on the other hand, restricted to David personally, as though he had said it when living in his youth at Bethlehem Ephratah had heard men speak of the Ark. Again, the

conjoined "we heard" has been held to imply that the Ark had become so far forgotten that its existence at Ephratah had become a mere matter of rumour, and that no one could say that it had been seen there. Lastly, a contrast has been suggested as the true sense, "we heard that the Ark was to be found at Ephratah, but when a search was made for it, it proved to be elsewhere;" *at Ephratah, "Ephrath, which is Bethlehem"* (Gen. xxxv. 19, Ruth iv. 11, Micah v. 2). Another suggestion is that Ephratah is employed for Ephraim, and that Shiloh is the place intended (1 Sam. i. 9, iii. 21). Further conjectures propose Beth-shemesh and the district round Kirjath-jearim as the locality to which the name of Ephratah is given. The interpretation which puts the passage into the mouth of David seems to be the one to be preferred, "When dwelling at Bethlehem Ephratah we heard of the Ark; we found it in after-years, where we had been told it was, at Kirjath-jearim." The mystical Commentators connect the passage with S. Luke ii. 8-14; *fields of the wood*, "fields of Jaar," of which word Jearim is the plural form. The Ark remained lost in obscurity at Kirjath-jearim, "the city of woods," for twenty years (1 Sam. vii. 2). 7, *His footstool*, the Ark was at the feet of Him Who dwelt between the Cherubim. 8, *Arise, &c.*, the cry raised "when the Ark set forward" (Num. x. 35); *Thou and the Ark, &c.*, this verse of this Psalm is the only place in the Psalter in which the Ark is mentioned. The Ark was the assurance of God's presence with His people. 10, *For Thy servant David's sake*, this expression would seem to point out that the Psalm was composed subsequently to the time of David; *Turn not away, &c.*, the specially Anointed one was the High Priest (Ex. xl.

13). The “Anointed” one here was either David or an anointed King amongst his descendants. Reject not the worship which he offers, nor the prayer which he makes. To turn away the face of anyone was to dismiss the applicant, and to refuse to grant the petition preferred (1 Kings ii. 16, margin, 2 Kings xviii. 24); the opposite and contrasted phrase occurs in Ps. lxxxiv. 9. Some would see in the words the implied prayer, “Delay not the coming of Messiah.” 11, *The LORD hath sworn, &c.*, the Psalmist pleads the immutability of the promise. 12, *If thy children, &c.*, the conditions of the promise are quoted in order to shew that existing circumstances were the result of those conditions having been disregarded. 13, *For the LORD, &c.*, the fact of this choice of Zion is an argument to the Psalmist’s mind for the restoration of David’s throne. 14, *This is My rest, &c.*, inasmuch as it was the resting-place of the Ark. 15, *Her poor will I satisfy, &c.* (S. Luke i. 53, S. Matt. v. 6, S. Mark viii. 4, 8, 9). The Mystical Expositors see in this the “bread which came down from heaven” (S. John vi. 50, 51), the “spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of Christ.” 16, *with salvation*, the answer goes beyond the request made in verse 9. All Christians are “a royal priesthood” (1 Peter ii. 9, Eph. iv. 24). 17, *the horn*, this was the type of strength; *a lamp* (1 Kings xi. 36). David’s great descendant was to be “a light to lighten the Gentiles” (S. Luke ii. 25-32). The expression may have been suggested by the thought of the lamps in the Tabernacle, which were to burn “before the LORD continually” (Lev. xxiv. 1-4). 18, *His crown flourish*, His mitre, the Messiah was to “be a priest upon His throne” (Zech. vi. 13), the diadem was to be His (Ezek. xxi. 26, 27, S. Luke i. 32, Rev. xix. 12).

## PSALM CXLIII.

(ASH-WEDNESDAY, EVENSONG.)

**The History.**—The Septuagint Translators adopt a tradition that this Psalm was written by David “when his son pursued him,” a view with which some modern Commentators agree. Like other Psalms of that period, it is marked by a degree of sadness greater than any found in those written during the persecution by Saul. Other Expositors class it with the post-exilic Psalms, and consider it to be the composition of a writer of that period who made the style of David his model.

**The Structure, &c.**—The Psalm consists of Two Portions, each containing six verses. The *First* part, verses 1-6, is chiefly the outpouring of the Psalmist’s complaint. The *Second* part, verses 7-12, contains the prayer founded upon it. It is the last of the seven Penitential Psalms, and is specially adapted by its character for Ash-Wednesday use.

**The Inscription.**—This simply attributes the Psalm to David.

A Psalm of David.

1. O LORD, hear my prayer, give ear to my supplications;  
In Thy faithfulness answer me, in Thy righteousness.
2. And enter not into judgement with Thy servant,  
For in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.<sup>1</sup>

3. For the enemy hath persecuted my soul,  
He hath smitten<sup>2</sup> my life down to the ground,  
He hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those  
that have been long dead.
4. Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed<sup>3</sup> within me ;  
My heart within me is desolate.<sup>4</sup>
5. I remember the days of old,  
I meditate on all Thy works ;  
On the works of Thy hands I muse.
6. I stretch forth my hands unto Thee ;  
My soul [thirsteth] as a thirsty land after Thee,<sup>5</sup>
7. Hear me speedily, O LORD ; my spirit faileth ;  
Hide not Thy face from me ;  
Lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.
8. Cause me to hear Thy lovingkindness in the  
morning,  
For in Thee do I trust ;  
Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk,  
For unto Thee I lift up my soul.
9. Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies ;  
Unto Thee I flee to hide me.<sup>6</sup>
10. Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God,  
Thy good spirit lead me into the land of  
uprightness.<sup>7</sup>
11. For Thy Name's sake, O LORD, quicken me ;  
For Thy righteousness sake bring my soul out of  
trouble.
12. And of Thy mercy cut off mine enemies,  
And destroy all them that afflict my soul ;  
For I am Thy servant.

**Critical References.**—1, *be righteous*, Perowne, Delitzsch.  
2, *crushed*, Kay, Delitzsch 3, Perowne ; *wrapt in gloom*, Kay ;  
4, *Itt. usionies itself ; is full of amazement*, Perowne. 5, *my soul*

*is as a weary land to Thee, Kay, Perowne. 6, on Thee do I reckon, Targum; to Thee have I confided, Kay; I have hidden myself with Thee, Delitzsch, Ewald, Hengstenberg; unto Thee have I fled to hide me, Perowne. 7, along a level land, Kay.*

**New Testament References.**—The Psalm is not quoted in the New Testament.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *O LORD, hear, &c.*, this twofold expression of the Psalmist's prayer rests upon a twofold plea, on the faithfulness and righteousness of the Divine character. 2, *And enter, &c.*, bring not my offences before Thy bar; plead not against me, for human weakness still clings to the servants of God (1 Jno. i. 9). 3, *For the enemy, &c.*, a recognition, on the Psalmist's part, that the persecutions of the enemy were permitted as a chastisement for his sin. 4, *desolate*, “astonies itself,” loses itself in the attempt to fathom the mystery of suffering. 5, *I remember, &c.*, his “crown of sorrow” was the recollection of “the days of old” (Job xxix. 2). 6, *I stretch forth, &c.* (Job xi. 13); *my soul, &c.* (Ps. lxiii. I, Isa. xxxv. 7), as the parched ground appears to thirst for the showers. 7, *Hear me, &c.* (Ps. lxix. 17); *Lest I be like, &c.*, my condition is become so desperate that unless help come speedily I shall become, &c. 8, *in the morning*, let me not remain even another day unhelped. Cause the night of sorrow to pass, that joy may come in the morning (Job xi. 17, Amos v. 8). When the Resurrection Morning shall have come “there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain” (Rev. xxi. 4). 9, *For unto Thee, &c.*, literally, “to Thee have I hidden,” either, “to Thee have I betaken myself as to a refuge” (Ps. lvii. 1, lxi. 3), “I have hidden myself in Thee for safety”

(Col. iii. 3, 2 Tim. i. 12, 1 Pet. ii. 23), or, "to Thee have I committed all my troubles" (Ps. xxxvii. 5), or, "I have hidden from Thy sight every attempt at self-vindication." 10, *Teach me, &c.*, instruct me as to the way in which I should walk, and then lead me by Thy Spirit's guidance and hold up my goings in Thy paths ; *the land of uprightness*, lead me along level ground, in a way wherein I shall not stumble (Jer. xxxi. 9). 11, *For Thy Name's sake*, not only for the relief of my necessities, but for the setting forth of Thy glory ; *For Thy righteousness' sake*, &c., rather, "Thou wilt bring," "wilt cut off," &c. ; the Psalmist is assured that the plea advanced in the first verse will prove an effectual one (1 Cor. xv. 26, Rev. xxii. 3).

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## PSALM CXLV.

(*WHIT-SUNDAY, EVENSONG.*)

**The History.**—If the Inscription is to be relied upon, the Psalm is to be ranked among the compositions of David. The Septuagint refers it to Haggai and Zechariah, that is, to the Restoration Period.

**The Structure, &c.**—This Psalm is one of the Alphabetical ones, which may be regarded as an intimation of its late date. A peculiarity attaching to it is the omission of the letter *Nun*. The Talmud suggests that as that letter begins the verse, "Fallen

is the virgin of Israel" (Amos v. 2), the dirge-like character of that passage led to the omission of the letter in this place. The Septuagint fills the gap by interpolating between verses 13 and 14, "The LORD is faithful in all His words and holy in all His works." The insertion finds no place in the old Versions or in Jewish manuscripts. One Chaldee manuscript only gives it in the bottom margin. The chief subject of the Psalm is the praise of the Creator, whose greatness, majesty, compassion, and mercy it celebrates, the latter two especially as extended to "every living thing." The Whit-Sunday reference is evidently connected with verse 11, "They shall talk of Thy power," as having received a fulfilment when every man heard the Apostles speak in his own tongue of "the wonderful works of God" (Acts ii. 5-11).

**The Inscription.**—The Psalm is attributed to David. Whoever its author may have been, it is markedly a "Hymn of Praise." It is the only Psalm singled out to bear that designation, being described by the singular of the Hebrew word which in its plural form is used to denominate the Psalter as the book of "Praises."

David's *Psalm* of praise.

1. I will extol Thee, my God, O King,<sup>1</sup>  
And I will bless Thy Name for ever and ever.
2. Every day will I bless Thee,  
And I will praise Thy name for ever and ever.
3. Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised,  
And His greatness is unsearchable.
4. One generation to another shall praise Thy works,  
And shall declare Thy mighty acts.

5. Of the glorious honour of Thy majesty  
And of Thy wondrous works, will I speak.<sup>2</sup>
6. And men shall speak of the might of Thy terrible  
acts ;  
And Thy greatness—will I declare.
7. The memorial of Thy great goodness they shall  
utter abundantly<sup>3</sup>  
And shall sing of Thy righteousness.
8. Gracious and full of compassion is the LORD,  
Slow to anger and great in mercy.
9. The LORD is good to all,  
And His tender mercies are over all His works.
10. All Thy works shall praise Thee, O LORD,  
And Thy saints shall bless Thee.
11. They shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom,  
And talk of Thy power ;
12. To make known to the sons of men His acts of  
might ;  
And the glorious majesty<sup>4</sup> of His kingdom.
13. Thy kingdom is a kingdom of all ages,  
And Thy dominion throughout all generations.
14. The LORD upholdeth all that fall,  
And raiseth up all that be bowed down.
15. The eyes of all look unto Thee,  
And Thou givest them their meat in due season.
16. Thou openest Thine hand,  
And satisfiest the desire of every living thing.
17. The LORD is righteous in all His ways,  
And loving in all His works.
18. The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon  
Him,  
To all that call upon Him in truth.

19. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him,  
He also will hear their cry and will save them.
20. The LORD preserveth all them that love Him,  
But all the wicked will He destroy.
21. My mouth shall speak<sup>5</sup> the praise of the LORD,  
And let all flesh bless His holy name for ever  
and ever.

**Critical References.**—1, *the king*, Kay; 2, *meditate*, Perowne, Delitzsch; *muse over*, Kay. 3, *lit.*, *pour forth*, 4, *the glory of the grandeur*, Kay. 5, *Let my mouth speak*, Kay, Perowne, Delitzsch.

**New Testament References.**—This Psalm is not quoted in the New Testament.

**Explanatory Notes.**—Ver. 1, *I will extol, &c.*, as God can never cease to be, so neither will His praise come to an end. The assurance that God was his God, was a pledge to the Psalmist of his own immortality, the desire, and the power to praise could never be quenched. Death would not put an end to his praises but would only transfer them from time to eternity. “Day by day we magnify Thee, And we worship Thy Name, ever, world without end;” *O King*, the relationship of being his ruler and judge. 3, *unsearchable*, hence arises the endlessness of the praise. 5, *will I speak*, the meaning may possibly be, I will rehearse. 7, *the memorial, &c.*, not only the greatness of God, but also His favour and goodness towards us will furnish themes for praise; *Thy righteousness*, since all the acts of God are in accordance with perfect justice. 8, *Gracious and full of compassion, &c.*, the Divine description of the Divine character (Ex. xxxiv. 6). 9, *to all*, and if so,

much more to His own people. 10, *All Thy works, &c.*, even the inanimate ones, by their silent fulfilment of the purposes of their creation; *And the saints*, these shall offer articulate praise, they will give thanks for His great glory to the "heavenly King, God the Father Almighty." 11, *and talk, &c.* (S. Matt. iii. 12). 13, *Thy kingdom, &c.*, earthly kingdoms pass away, the kingdom of God is everlasting. 14, *raiseth up, &c.*, the Septuagint renders the crew by the word which S. Luke afterwards employed in his account of the cure of the woman who was "bowed together" (S. Luke xiii. 13). The glory of the kingdom is manifested in the condescension of the king. 15, *The eyes of all, &c.*, this phrase was used by the Jews at the Passover-meal, formed with the next verse a "grace before meat" many centuries in the Western Church. Even irrational creatures look up to God for their sustenance (S. Luke xii. 24). 16, *Thou openest not the hand*, as if the thought was borrowed from the command of scattering food. 17, *in all His ways*, the ways both of His providence and of His grace. 18, *high* (Deut. iv. 7), not like an earthly monarch, to whom access is often difficult, or is denied; *in truth*, in doubt or hypocrisy (S. Jas. i. 6-7). 19, *He will fulfil, &c.*, He will convert His servants' desires into realities "as may be most expedient for them;" *in that fear Him*, these are also "them that love Him;" both the fear and love are childlike. 20, *The Lord preserveth, &c.* (S. Jno. x. 27-28, S. Matt. xxv. 41). 21, *His Holy name*, the Holy name into which men were to be baptized (S. Matt. xxviii. 19, S. i. 5, Philipp. ii. 10-11, Rev. vii. 9-12, xv. 3-4).

## APPENDIX A.

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### AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORICAL EVENTS, FROM B.C. 1063 TO B.C. 445, USUALLY CONNECTED WITH THE PROPER PSALMS.

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Although Job has been supposed by some to have been possibly the writer of Psalm lxxviii., it is allowable to pass over such a conjectural authorship and to commence with David (whose name is so pre-eminently associated with the Psalter), a sketch of a history which is connected with many prophets and kings.

**B.C. 1063.** Whether any of the Psalms were actually composed during the period of David's shepherd life is extremely doubtful, though his observations of nature as he watched over his flock by day and night, and his encounters with wild animals such as "the lion and the bear," stored his mind with the imagery, which he afterwards employed in such compositions as Psalms viii., xix., and xxii. (in its 13th and 21st verses).

Some would assign Psalm civ., which describes the work of God in Creation, to David, but the authorship of the Psalm (which is probably of a late date) is in fact unknown.

The position which David occupied in the Court of Saul was a difficult one, and notwithstanding his habitual prudence he was at last compelled to escape from the danger which threatened him by a flight from his own house, in which he was aided by his wife Michel (1 Sam. xix. 11-18). This occurrence has been thought to have been the occasion of Psalm vi., with its allusions to the hatred and baffled malice of his enemies.

After vainly endeavouring to find a secure retreat either in Israel or Philistia, David took up his abode in the Cave of Adullam (1 Sam. xxii. 1), and with this period Psalm lvii. is probably connected. After some further adventures and escapes, and when Saul had taken the field in person in pursuit of him, David concealed himself in the Wilderness of Ziph (1 Sam. xxiii. 14), and the treacherous betrayal of his hiding-place by the Ziphites caused him to pour out his prayers and thanksgivings in Psalm liv. Another refuge was sought at Engedi (1 Sam. xxiv. 1), to which Psalm lvii. may also possibly owe its origin. On entering for the second time the territory of Achish, King of Gath (but now at the head of a band of followers), Ziklag was assigned to him as a place of residence (1 Sam. xxvii. 2-6). To the circumstance of its subsequent destruction by the Amalekites (1 Sam. xxx. 1) some would attribute the composition of Psalm xxxviii. A recollection of the whole of his eventful wanderings was probably present to David's mind when he wrote Psalm xl., and possibly Psalm xxii. may refer to the same period.

**B.C.** The removal of the Ark, after its long  
**1048.** sojourn at Kirjath-jearim, forms one of the  
most prominent incidents in the earlier portion of

David's reign. This event, which was made the occasion of a national festival (1 Chron. xiii. 1-8), is the subject of a group of Psalms. The anxiety of David in the matter, and his search for this, the most sacred of the contents of the Tabernacle, is portrayed in Psalm cxxxii. (though the writer, and the time of the composition of that Psalm, are uncertain). The first attempt at a removal was unsuccessful, and ended in the Ark being carried aside into the house of Obed-edom (1 Chron. xiii. 13), but on a second occasion the Ark was brought up in triumph to the tent which David had prepared for its reception. Its entrance into the city is celebrated in Psalm xxiv. Psalm lxviii. describes the long procession which accompanied it up to Zion, and Psalm xv. is an inquiry as to the qualifications required in an acceptable worshipper in the Holy Place.

B.C. The wars of David would seem to have 1040. given occasion for the composition of several of the Psalms. The war against Edom (2 Sam. viii. 14, 1 Chron. xviii. 12) was probably the theme of the latter portion of the sixtieth Psalm, which in long after years was employed as the closing portion of Psalm cviii. It is more than doubtful whether Psalm cx. should be connected with any historical occurrence, though some would see in it an allusion to the war waged against the Syro-Ammonite Confederacy (2 Sam. x. 6, 1 Chron. xix. 6), and a reference to this alliance is held by some to be intended in the language of Psalm ii. A clear connection, however, appears to exist between Psalm xxi. and the taking of Rabbah (2 Sam. xii. 26, 1 Chron. xx. 1).

**B.C.** One only out of the number of the Proper 1035. Psalms has reference to that dark page in David's history which records his fall. Psalm xxxii. is a testimony to his repentance and restoration, and sets forth the blessedness of the man whose transgression is forgiven. About this period David would seem to have been prostrated by the sickness to which so many of the Psalms appear to contain allusions, and which form, in the opinion of many, the subject of Psalms vi. and xxxviii.

**B.C.** The success which closed the campaign 1024. against the Ammonites seems for a time to have hushed up and hidden the crime so secretly and terribly connected with that war, but which was soon, however, to receive its retribution. Psalms lxix and lxxxviii (possibly) and Psalm cxlii. would seem to have been prompted by the bitter sorrow occasioned by Absalom's rebellion, the greatest of the successive calamities which cast a gloom over the remainder of David's life.

**B.C.** The conspiracy of Adonijah (1 Kings i. 5-53), 1015. which broke out nearly at the close of David's reign, was supported by representatives both of the army and of the priesthood, and seemingly met with the approval of all the royal princes, with the exception of Solomon, against whose succession to the throne it was directed. David, however, succeeded in suppressing it by the proclamation and installation of Solomon as his successor (1 Kings i. 43-48). To this period some would refer both Psalms ii. and lxix. Lastly, "when the days drew nigh that he should die," David gave to Solomon and to the people a

charge respecting the building of the Temple (1 Chron. xxix. 1-20), to which an allusion may possibly be traced in Psalm xl. 16.

B.C. The connection of Israel with Egypt was 1014. resumed when the daughter of the Egyptian Pharaoh became the Queen of Solomon (1 Kings iii. 1), who was probably "the King" in whose honour some unknown poet composed Psalm xlv. His solemn dedication of the Temple may have been the historical occasion of Psalm cxxxii.

B.C. During the reign of his son Rehoboam the 972. relations between the two nations had nearly reverted to the condition of a second Egyptian bondage. A change in the dynasty had placed a king upon the throne of Egypt who was no longer an ally of the House of Solomon, but of that of the revolted Jeroboam, and who after a successful invasion of Judah and the surrender of Jerusalem carried away the treasures both of the temple and the palace as the price of a disgraceful peace (1 Kings xiv. 21-26, 2 Chron. xii. 1-10). To this period Psalms lxxxv. and lxxxviii. have been attributed, the "captivity" of which the former speaks being interpreted as meaning not the actual captivity of the Exile, but the threatened subjugation by Egypt. The seeming failure at this juncture of the promises made to David has led some to think that Psalm lxxxix. has reference to this national calamity.

B.C. The next name which occupies (according to 896. some writers) a prominent position in connection with the Psalms is that of Jehoshaphat. Notwithstanding that for the most part of his reign "the fear of the

Lord" fell on the surrounding nations "so that they made no war" upon him, an invasion of Judah was on one occasion carried out by Moab, Ammon, and Edom. The allied army had advanced as far as Engedi (2 Chron. xx. 1-2), and Jehoshaphat and his people were in despair at their approach when a prophetic message bade them to go out and meet the invaders, but then to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Their enemies perished by an unexplained mutual destruction, and after three days spent in the collection of the spoil, Jehoshaphat and every man of Judah assembled in the valley of Berachah to march from thence to Jerusalem. It is impossible definitely to connect Psalms xlviij. and xlviii with this occasion, although they appear to celebrate a deliverance obtained without a battle.

**B.C.** After more than a hundred years had passed 726. away, another king sat upon the throne of Judah, with whom none of his successors could be compared "nor any that went before him" (2 Kings xviii. 5). The monarch so pre-eminent was Hezekiah. With his sickness (2 Kings xx. 1-11) Psalm lxxxviii has been connected, with his marriage (2 Kings xxi. 1) with less probability Psalm xlv. It was in his reign that "The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold," and the destruction of the army of Sennacherib "unsmote by the sword" (2 Kings xix. 35) may, with good reason, be held to be commemorated in Psalms xlviij. and xlviii.

**B.C.** With the death of Josiah (2 Chron. xxxv. 610. 23-5, 2 Kings xxiii. 29) the Jewish monarchy was fast drawing to its close, and that seeming wreck

of all the hopes of the House of David might well have given occasion to the composition of Psalm lxxxix.

**B.C.** The crisis in the history of Judah brought 610-8<sup>3</sup> about soon after by the captivity of Jelioiachin and the destruction of the Temple and city, and the carrying away to Babylon of Zedekiah and the people (2 Chron. xxxvi. 9-20) might well have been the theme of the same Psalm.

**B.C.** The period of the seventy years' captivity 606-536. may be considered to have been brought to a close, B.C. 536, by the decree of Cyrus (2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, Ez. i. 1-4). The composition of Psalm cii. may probably be assigned to some period not long after that date, as it contains an anticipation of the "set time" for the rebuilding of Zion being come. It is an example among the Proper Psalms of one of the Psalms of the Exile. With it some would class Psalms xxii., xxxviii., xl., and lxix.

**B.C.** Zerubbabel was apparently the recognised 535. head or "Prince" of the Children of the Captivity at the time of the promulgation of the edict of Cyrus. He became the leader of the first band of returning exiles (Ez. ii. 2) which possibly may have included in its number the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, one of whom has been suggested as the author of Psalm cxlv. Their first act on their arrival was to set up the altar of the God of Israel, and to observe the Feast of Tabernacles (Ez. iii. 2-4). In the second year after their return they laid the foundation of the Second Temple (Ez.

iii. 10). Its subsequent Dedication (Ez. vi. 16) was observed as a festival. To one of these occasions Psalm cxviii. may be referred.

**B.C.** Seventy-seven years had passed away before 458. Ezra led a second band of exiles on their home-ward journey (Ez. vii. 6-8). They were the bearers of costly gifts from the Jews who remained in Babylon for the adorment of the House of God. To the period of the Return belong Psalm cviii., cxi., cxiii., cxiv., cxxx., and perhaps Psalm lxxxv. Some unnamed writers from among the Men of the Restora-tion were probably their authors, though it is impossible to refer them to any particular occasions.

**B.C.** After thirteen years Nehemiah appears upon 445. the scene (Neh. i. 1). Acting on the authority which he had received from the king he commenced (three days after his arrival at Jerusalem) that work of restoration to which he purposed to devote himself (Neh. ii. 11). Tradition states that he was accom-panied on his journey by yet a third company of Exiles. A celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles, carried out with all of the old observances (Neh. viii. 17) may probably be the event commemorated in Psalm cxviii.

A consideration of the extended period to which the Proper Psalms have reference, brings out into strong relief the comparatively fragmentary and progressive character of the Revelation by which it pleased God to speak in time past to the fathers, and the contrast to the Faith once for all delivered unto the saints. The writers of the Psalms had primarily their own immediately surrounding circumstances in view, but

their language is not to be limited by any private interpretation. It is in the quotations and comments of the New Testament, as combined in the truths of the Christian Verity, and expounded by the Catholic Religion, that we find the key which can unlock the mysteries, the lens which can collect into one focus the scattered rays, of the older Revelation.

## APPENDIX B.

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### THE BEARING OF THE "PROPER PSALMS" ON "CERTAIN DAYS."

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The choice of particular Psalms for use upon certain days has apparently been influenced by various reasons. In some instances the language of the Psalms (we may still believe wholly unconsciously on the part of their writers) has been found to be verbally descriptive of events, far removed from, and in no way connected with, its primary application. Even the contrast between the idea which it set forth in the first instance, and its striking adaptability to some wholly different circumstance, has possibly had no small influence on its selection. But in many cases such an explanation would fall far short of the truth. Passages occur which cannot be regarded as unintentional verbal coincidences, but as being distinctly typical of Gospel and heavenly realities. The selection has been guided in such instances by a clear-sighted spiritual discernment. In other portions a prophetic character is unmistakably present. More especially is this evident when a regal authority and dominion is ascribed to the Messiah, such as can only receive its perfect fulfilment when expounded of Him "Whose kingdom shall have no end."

## CHRISTMAS-DAY.

*MATTINS....PSALMS XIX., XLV., LXXXV.  
EVENSONG ..PSALMS LXXXIX., CX., CXXXII.*

The Proper Psalms for Christmas-Day not only commemorate the birth, "when the fulness of the time was come," of "a Saviour which is Christ the Lord," but the whole mystery of His holy Incarnation. The opening words of Psalm xix., though they readily lend themselves by a happy accommodation to a description of the scene at Bethlehem when "the glory of the Lord" shone round about the shepherds, and seemingly anticipate the angelic song of "Glory to God in the highest," must not be cited as if they were the language of prophecy.

It is allowable to institute a closer comparison between the expressions of the Psalmist and those of S. John, when the one affirms that "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork," and the other, that the Word which was made flesh "was with God," and "was God," and that "all things were made by Him," or, as another Scripture saith, "by the Word of the Lord were the heavens made" (Psalm xxxiii. 6). Ever since the prophet Malachi spoke of the Messiah as "the Sun of righteousness" (Mal. iv. 2), the Church has not been slow to perceive the appropriateness of the figure as applied to Him Who was the "light of the world" and the "dayspring from on high." In the "bridegroom" coming forth to his marriage she has recognised Him "Who loved the Church and gave Himself for it" (Eph. v. 25), and reads the Psalm as if interpreted by that language of the Apocalypse which describes the "holy Jerusalem descending out

of heaven from God having the glory of God" (Rev. xxi. 10), and the "great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men" (Rev. xxi. 3).

The majesty and grace of Christ's kingdom are set forth in Psalm xlv. by a continuance of the same figure of a kingly bridegroom. Messiah, in the "gracious words" that proceed out of His mouth, displays a token that God had blessed Him for ever. His throne is the throne of God, yet He sits as the Son of Man upon the throne of His glory (S. Mark x. 37, 45), anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows, inasmuch as the Spirit was given without measure to Him (S. Jno. iii. 34) Who was "the holy child Jesus," anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power (Acts iv. 27, x. 38).

The language of Psalm lxxxv. may also be compared with the opening of S. John's Gospel (S. Jno. i. 14) and with the declaration made by Him who came into the world to "bear witness to the truth" (S. Jno. xviii. 37), and who could say, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (S. Jno. xiv. 6). The turning of the "captivity of Jacob" is not inapplicable to Him Who claimed to have come "to preach deliverance to the captives" (S. Luke iv. 18, 21). The Rabbinical writers saw an allusion to the birth of Messiah in the 11th verse.

The strain of almost vehement exhortation which pervades Psalm lxxxix may seem at first sight inappropriate on such a festival as Christmas-Day. The key to its Gospel application is to be found in the truth that Jesus Christ our Lord—was made of the seed of David according to the flesh (Rom. i. 3). It opens with the Psalmist's determination to sing of

that mercy of the Lord which "is on them that fear Him, from generation to generation" (S. Luke i. 50). Its language well befits a Season when we recall how unto us a child was born and a Son given (Isa. ix. 6), Whose name was to be called "Wonderful" (ver. 5), Whose birth was heralded by the praises of a "multitude of the heavenly host" (ver. 5), Who was "full of grace and truth" (ver. 14). The depth of sorrow with which the Psalmist first quotes God's covenant made with His servant, and then bewails its seeming failure, only brings to light the intensity of an underlying conviction that, eventually God would "not lie unto David," but that a king should yet sit on "the throne of his father David," to Whom should be ascribed "blessing and honour and glory and power."

Our Lord Himself quotes Psalm cx. (S. Matt. xxii. 42-5) with a reference to the same subject. David's descendant, both a Priest and King, "born—in the city of David," was to be his son and yet his Lord. The one He could be only by virtue of His descent from David, the other, because He was "the Son of the living God" (S. Matt. xvi. 16). "Emmanuel—God with us" (S. Matt. i. 23).

Psalm cxxxii. narrates the anxiety of David with regard to finding a "tabernacle" in which God should manifest His presence (S. Jno. i. 14), connects the Ark with Bethlehem (S. Luke ii. 15), and pleads the covenant made with David that of his seed God "would raise up Christ to sit on his throne" (Acts ii. 30).

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## ASH-WEDNESDAY.

*MATTINS*.....PSALMS VI., XXXII., XXXVIII.  
*EVENSONG*.....PSALMS CII., CXXX., CXLIII.

The Psalms appointed for Ash-Wednesday are six out of the seven "Penitential Psalms," and record either the spiritual experiences of the penitent or represent various aspects of repentance. Psalm vi. appears to be the language of a heart which trusted that "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." Psalm xxxii. contrasts the blessedness of a consciousness of pardon with the misery of the unrepenting sinner. Psalm xxxviii. dwells upon sin as the source of suffering, but some of its language (vers. 9-14) is applicable to Him Who knew no sin. Psalm cii. is suitable for those who are in "any manner of adversity," and dwells on the fact that man "hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery." Psalm cxxx. is a cry out of the depths for succour, and Psalm cxlii. is the outpouring of the heart of one "acquainted with grief."

## GOOD-FRIDAY.

*MATTINS*.....PSALMS XXII., XL., LIV.  
*EVENSONG*.....PSALMS LXIX., LXXXVIII.

Our Blessed Lord, by His use of the opening words of Psalm xxii., has taught us to understand it of His Cross and Passion, and S. John, when he records an historical circumstance (S. John xix. 24), affirms that it was an unconscious fulfilment of this place of Scripture. The Psalmist has described his own condition.

in language much of which must ever remain figurative, though applicable as such both to himself and to a future Sufferer (vers. 12-16). Nevertheless, other expressions, which were probably figurative as regarded the writer (vers 7, 8, 17, 18), can now be seen to have been literal anticipations of the narratives of the Evangelists, who furnish the best Commentary upon the Psalm. Psalm xl. directs our thoughts (ver. 6) to that "obedience of one" by which "shall many be made righteous" (Rom. v. 19), to Him Who could appeal (ver. 7) to the Scriptures as testifying of Himself (S. Jno. v. 39), Who came not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him (S. Jno. vi. 38), Who learned "obedience by the things which He suffered" (Heb. v. 8), "and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. ii. 8), and "made there (by His one oblation of Himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world."

The circumstances which gave rise to the composition of Psalm liv. render it appropriate to the day. Not by Judas only, was the conduct of the Ziphites re-enacted, when he "sought opportunity" (S. Matt. xxvi. 16) to betray the Son of Man "into the hands of men" (S. Matt. xvii. 22) "to be crucified" (S. Matt. xxvi. 2), but by the whole Jewish nation, who were "the betrayers and murderers of the Just One" (Acts vii. 52), and whose doom was unconsciously pronounced by the Chief Priests and Pharisees when they said, "He will miserably destroy those wicked men" (S. Matt. xxi. 41).

Our Lord in two instances (S. John ii. 17, xv. 25) applies the language of Psalm lxix. to Himself, and S. Paul quotes the 9th verse in proof that "Christ

pleased not Himself, but, as it is written, the reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell on me" (Rom. xv. 3). As in the case of Psalm xxii., a comparison with the Gospel narrative will show how large a proportion of its language (verses 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 20, 21, 26, 29) received a literal fulfilment in Him who was "poor" (S. Matt. viii. 20, 2 Cor. viii. 9), and "exceeding sorrowful even unto death" (S. Matt. xxvi. 38). The case will be the same with Psalm lxxxviii., which is the "grievous complaint" of a seemingly forsaken sufferer, who is drawing nigh to the grave (verses 3-5), whose friends have deserted him (verse 8), who utters a cry of expostulation (verse 14), whose persecutors surround him (verse 17), whose acquaintance stand afar off (verse 18), hidden in the darkness which falls upon him (S. Matt. xxvii. 45).

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### EASTER-DAY.

*MATTINS* ... .PSALMS II., LVII., CXI.  
*EVENSONG*.....PSALMS CXIII., CXIV., CXVIII.

The frequent quotations in the New Testament from Psalm ii. attest its Messianic character. They are concerned either with the setting up of the Kingdom of Christ, or with the assertion of His Resurrection. A connection exists between the two. The Gospel, since its theme is Christ (1 Cor. xv. 1-4), was the subject under the Old Dispensation both of promise and prophecy (Acts xiii. 32, 33). The Incarnation and the Resurrection are its poles, "that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead" (2 Tim.

ii. 8). “Touching His Manhood,” He was “made of the seed of David” (Acts xiii. 23, Rom. i. 3); “touching His Godhead,” He was manifested to be “the Son of God with power—by the resurrection from the dead” (Rom. i. 4). The Resurrection was the seal and fulfilment of all the promises, whether made to Abraham, that in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed (Gen. xxii. 18), or to David, that Christ should “sit on his throne” (Acts ii. 30). The Cross and the Sepulchre seemed to have put an end to all such hopes “concerning Jesus of Nazareth” (S. Luke xxiv. 21), though David, “being a prophet,” “seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ” (Acts ii. 31), as that which must precede the setting up of His kingdom, even as the Son of David expounded how Christ ought “to have suffered and to enter into His glory” (S. Luke xxiv. 26). It is a risen Christ Who puts down “all rule and authority and power” (1 Cor. xv. 20, 23), it is “the first-born from the dead” Who “is the head of the body, the Church” (Col. i. 18), Who has “the utmost parts of the earth for His possession.” It was the assertion of this truth (which this Easter Psalm sets forth) which caused the preaching of S. Paul to be described as being of “one Jesus which was dead” but whom he “affirmed to be alive” (Acts xxv. 19), and again, of “another King, one Jesus” (Acts xvii. 7).

The triumphant character of the close of Psalm lvii. has probably led to its selection, and the expression “I will awake early,” or, “will awake the dawn,” has been associated with the finding of the sepulchre empty “very early in the morning” (S. Luke xxiv. 1), and has pointed its application to Him who is “the root and offspring of David, and the bright and

morning star" (Rev. xxii. 16). An allusion has been somewhat fancifully seen in "the cave" of the Inscription, to the "possession of a burying place" (Gen. xxiii. 9), the "sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock" (S. Mark xv. 46).

The theme of Psalm cxi. appears to be the deliverance of Israel, when God "sent redemption unto His people" (verse 9), and brought them "with His mighty power (verse 6) out of Egypt" (Deut. iv. 37). The Easter application of the Psalm consists in viewing that deliverance as typical of a greater redemption. Christ has ransomed His people from "the power of the grave," has redeemed them from death (Hos. xiii. 14), and has delivered those who otherwise through fear of death would have been all their lifetime subject to bondage (Heb. ii. 15). He "shewed His people the power of His works," His own power, which He exercised in the laying down of His life and in the taking of it again (S. John x. 17, 18), the power and glory of the Father, by which He "was raised up from the dead" (Rom. vi. 4) and "shewed—openly" (Acts x. 40), the power of the quickening Spirit (Rom. viii. 11), Who is the Lord and Giver of life. Christ's resurrection is the pledge of the resurrection of His people, that God who "raised up the Lord" will also raise them up "by His own power" (1 Cor. vi. 14), that their mortal bodies, "sown in weakness, shall be raised in power," that the redemption of His people shall extend to the redemption of their bodies (Rom. viii. 23), which shall be "fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. iii. 21).

The "Hallel," or Hymn of Praise sung at the Paschal Feast, comprised from Psalm cxiii. to Psalm cxviii. Its first two Psalms, together with its closing one, have been transferred to the Services of the Christian Passover. The language of Psalm cxiii. is readily applicable (verse 7) to that Jesus Whom "God raised up," and Who is "by the right hand of God exalted" (Acts ii. 32, 33), "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow" (Phil. ii. 10). Psalm cxiv. dwells again upon that type of the redemption of God's people which was set forth "when Israel went out of Egypt." Psalm cxviii., which concludes the Hallel, probably formed in consequence a portion of the "hymn" sung by our Lord and His Apostles before setting forth to Gethsemane (S. Mark xiv. 26). Its ancient Paschal Use has led to its adoption as suitable for Easter rejoicing, while the frequent quotations in the New Testament of its 22nd verse attest its Messianic character. The "chastisement (verse 18) of our peace" was laid upon Christ, and though under it He "offered up prayers (verse 5) with strong crying and tears," yet He, "for the joy that was set before Him, endured the Cross, despising the shame." His anticipations of the Cross (S. Matt. xvi. 21, xvii. 23) were ever connected with a fore-knowledge that He should "be raised again the third day," and not be "given over unto death." The Psalmist could "give thanks unto the Lord" because He was good, on a day which he specially regarded as one which the Lord had made, but the Church can cry on her Easter Festival, which is the Lord's Day above all others, "O death where is thy sting, O grave where is thy victory — thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. xv. 57).

## ASCENSION-DAY.

*MATTINS* .....PSALMS VIII., XV., XXI.  
*EVENSONG*.....PSALMS XXIV., XLVII., CVIII.

The writer of Psalm viii. could scarcely have been conscious of the full meaning of his words, but the question is, not what that was which was more immediately present to the mind of the writer, but what was the "mind of the Spirit." The quotations from this Psalm in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. ii. 9) make it evident that its subject is the exaltation of our human nature in the Person of Christ, the "taking of the Manhood into God." Psalm xv. is an exhortation to "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," and to the consequent seeking of "those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God," that so "we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell." The language of Psalm xxi., applicable in the first place to the victorious David, celebrates in its spiritual meaning the exaltation of Christ (the "King Messiah") with great triumph to His Mediatorial throne. Psalm xxiv. deals in its opening with the same subject as Psalm xv., but passes on to call upon the "everlasting doors" to be lifted up that Christ, "the King of Glory," victorious over the grave, may Himself enter in, and thus "open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers." Psalms xlvi. and cviii. are both of them songs of victory, and are spiritually applicable to Him Who "ascedded into the heavens," and is set at "the right hand of God," "far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named," "from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool" (Heb. x. 12, 13).

## WHIT-SUNDAY.

*MATTINS* .....PSALMS XLVIII., LXVIII.  
*EVENSONG*.....PSALMS CIV., CXLV.

In Psalm *xlviii.* the mystical Interpreters recognised in the "east wind" that "sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind" (Acts ii. 2) which filled all the house in which the Apostles were sitting on the day of Pentecost. Elsewhere, the wind that "bloweth where it listeth" is an illustration of the method of the Divine procedure with those that are born of the Spirit. The Psalm, however, which has for its primary object the celebration of the beauty of the earthly Zion, "the city of the great King," can be spiritually applied to the Church of Christ, the "city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," and to that Temple, not of man's building, which "groweth unto an holy Temple to the Lord—an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 22). The assurance of guidance with which it closes may be also spiritually understood of the Office of the promised Comforter, Who was to guide the Apostles into all the truth (S. John xvi. 13). Psalm *lxviii.* was one of the Psalms selected for use in the Jewish Pentecostal Service, an example which the Christian Church has followed. Pentecostal applications may be found throughout its verses; the "solitary" who are "set in a house" (verse 6) may be understood to be those who have "access by one Spirit unto the Father," and who become "of the household of God" (Eph. ii. 18, 19). No violence is done to verse 18 by understanding it of the Spirit given not by measure to the Second Adam (S. John iii. 34), or of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Church (Rom. viii. 11, 1 S. John

iv. 13), while a fulfilment of the assurance which verse 35 contains may be found in the promise made to the Apostles that they should be "endued with power from on high" (S. Luke xxiv. 49). Psalm civ. sets forth the Holy Spirit as the "Lord and Giver of Life." Psalm cxlv. celebrates the carrying on of the work commenced on the day of Pentecost (verses 4-7) by the constant preaching of "the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. iii. 8).

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The Proper Psalms are found in connection with their respective Days in either the Ambrosian or Gregorian Uses, and occasionally in both. The Proper Psalms for Ash-Wednesday were inserted at the last revision of the Prayer-Book, as were also those for Good-Friday; the selection for the latter Day accords with that found in the Ancient Uses. Psalms xv., xxiv., lvii., cviii., cxi., cxlv. occur in the First Book of K. Edward VI., and Psalm cviii. in his Second, in connection with their several occasions.

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